THE DIVINE COUNCIL IN LATE CANONICAL AND NON-CANONICAL SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH LITERATURE

by

Michael S. Heiser

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of

The requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

(Hebrew and Semitic Studies)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

2004

THE DIVINE COUNCIL IN LATE CANONICAL AND NON-CANONICAL SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH LITERATURE

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT

THE DIVINE COUNCIL IN LATE CANONICAL AND NON-CANONICAL SECOND TEMPLE JEWISH LITERATURE

Michael S. Heiser

Under the supervision of Professor Michael V. Fox

At the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Biblical scholarship has reached a consensus with respect to the presence of a divine assembly of gods in Israel's faith. Prior to the sixth century B.C.E., Israelite religion underwent an evolution from an initial polytheism to a firm monolatry, where the other gods of the divine council were tolerated but not worshipped. The religious crisis of Israel's early sixth century B.C.E. exile prompted the scribes to obscure the council in the canonical texts and compose new material declaring that Yahweh had punished Israel for her sins, brought her out of bondage, and put the other gods to death. This historical turnabout and its literary response marked the birth of true monotheism in Israel, where no other gods existed except Yahweh.

This reconstruction is plagued by numerous difficulties. There are hundreds of references to other gods in a divine council in exilic and post-exilic canonical texts and the non-canonical writings of Judaism's Second Temple period. The context for these references disallows the conclusion that the writers are speaking of idols or of the beliefs of pagans. Rather, they reflect the worldview of late Israelite religion and Second Temple Judaism. This worldview included the belief in a deified vice-regent who ruled the gods at the behest of the high God. So transparent was this divine vice regency that Second Temple Jewish authors wrote of a deified second power in heaven. The rhetoric of Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah that there are no other gods besides Yahweh fails as proof of the consensus view, since the same language is used in monolatrous pre-exilic texts and fails to account for the plethora of references to other gods in late Jewish writings.

This dissertation calls the consensus view of the development of monotheism in Israel into question by demonstrating that belief in a divine council survived the exile. As a result, this dissertation posits that the survival of Israel's pre-exilic divine council has greater explanatory

power than the consensus view of the development of monotheism with respect to divine plurality in late canonical and non-canonical Second Temple period texts.

Abbreviations

ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BEATAJ	Beitrage zur Erforschun des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentum
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
Bib	Biblica
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
BJRL	Bulletin of the John Rylands Library
BRev	Bible Review
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CBQMS	Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series
ConBNT	Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
COS	The Context of Scripture
DDD	Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DULAT	Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition
ER	Encyclopedia of Religion
ETL	Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
HALOT	The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament
HAT	Handbuch zum Alten Testament
HO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JR	Journal of Religion
JSJ	Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
KAI	Kanaanaische und aramaische Inschriften
KTU	The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places (KTU^2)
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NTS	New Testament Studies
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OLP	Orientalia lovaniensia periodica
Or	Orientalia
OTP	Old Testament Pseudepigrapha (Charlesworth)
OTS	Old Testament Studies
OtSt	*Oudtestamentische Studien*

PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series
RB	Revue Biblique
RevQ	Revue de Qumran
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SEL	Studi epigrafici e linguistici
SJLA	Studies in the Judaism of Late Antiquity
SJT	Southwestern Journal of Theology
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
TGUOS	Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum
UBL	Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur
UF	*Ugarit Forschungen*
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum Supplements
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift fürTheologie und Kirche

Chapter One

Introduction to the Study

1.1 *Previous Divine Council Scholarship and the Parameters of this Study*

The discovery of the tablets of ancient Ugarit in 1929 and their subsequent translation marked a watershed in the study of the religious worldview of the Hebrew Bible. One of the most significant revelations produced by the comparative investigation of the religion of ancient Israel and Ugarit was that the Hebrew Bible contained tantalizing hints of a pantheon. The "divine assembly" or "divine council" soon became a focus of biblical scholars, beginning in 1939 with J. Morgenstern's lengthy article on Psalm 82, likely the clearest biblical attestation to an Israelite divine assembly.[1] During the 1940s and 1950s, prominent studies emerged examining the striking and unmistakable correspondences between the god of Israel and two of Ugarit's most important deities, El and Baal.[2] The seminal work on the divine council as a motif throughout the Hebrew Bible, however, was a 1944 article by H. Wheeler Robinson.[3] Robinson's early study was followed in the next two decades by detailed analyses of the council and its members by a number of scholars.[4] The first book-length study of the divine council was published in 1980,[5] and was followed by significant works detailing various

---

[1] J. Morgenstern, "The Mythological Background of Psalm 82," *HUCA* 14 (1939): 29-126.

[2] For example, Marvin Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts* (VTSup 2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955); A. S. Kapelrud, *Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts* (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1952); J. Obermann, *Ugaritic Mythology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948); M. Dahood, "Ancient Semitic Deities in Syria and Palestine," in *Le Antiche Divinita Semitiche* (ed. S. Moscati; Studi Semitici 1; Rome: Centro di Studi Semitici, 1958), 65-94; O. Eissfeldt, "El and Yahweh," *JSS* 1 (1956): 25-37.

[3] H. Wheeler Robinson, "The Council of Yahweh," *JTS* 45 (1944): 151-157.

[4] Gerald Cooke, "The Sons of (the) God(s)," *ZAW* 76 (1964): 22-47; Edwin C. Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," *JBL* 83 (1964): 279-286; J. Gray, *The Legacy of Canaan* (2d ed.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965); James S. Ackerman, "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 82" (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1966); Patrick D. Miller, "The Divine Council and the Prophetic Call to War," *VT* 18 (1968): 100-107; idem, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); W. F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: An Historical Analysis of Two Conflicting Faiths* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968); Matitiahu Tsevat, "God and the Gods in Assembly," *HUCA* 40-41 (1969-1970): 123-137; Richard J. Clifford, "The Tent of El and the Israelite Tent of Meeting," *CBQ* 33 (1971): 221-227; idem, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*, (HSM 4; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972); Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Conrad L'Heureux, *Rank Among the Canaanite Gods* (HSM 21; Missoula: MT: Scholars Press, 1979); David Noel Freedman, "Who is Like Thee Among the Gods? The Religion of Early Israel," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 315-336; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002).

[5] E. Theodore Mullen, *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (HSM 24; Scholars Press, 1980).

aspects of the divine council throughout the extant literature of Canaan.[6] Most recently, an important book by Mark S. Smith has brought scholarship on the divine council up to date.[7]

All the scholarship to date on the divine council has focused on Israel's religion prior to the sixth century B.C.E., since it is commonly believed that after Israel emerged from exile, the idea of a pantheon of gods headed by Yahweh had been abandoned in favor of an intolerant monotheism. This dissertation challenges this consensus view of the development of monotheism in Israelite religion and Judaism by examining late canonical texts of the Hebrew Bible and non-canonical Second Temple period literature to discern whether or not the belief in a divine council that included other gods continued after the exile.[8] This task also necessarily involves interaction with several broad issues addressed in the scholarly study of Israelite religion and Second Temple period Judaism and the related academic literature. The result encompasses a new orientation with respect to the texts and the issue of monotheism in Israel and the creation of new conceptual bridges connecting the religions of pre-exilic Canaan, Israel and Second Temple Judaism. Hence, this study suggests new perspectives on certain issues involving these areas and proposes an alternative paradigm for understanding their connections.

Due to the sweeping religious questions and voluminous scholarly literature dealing with ancient religions of Canaan, Israel, and first century Judaism, boundaries must be placed on such a study. Since the religions of Canaan and pre-exilic Israel are foundational to what follows, the Second Temple period more conveniently lends itself to limitations for the sake of this study. For this reason the *terminus ad quem* of this study is Jewish literature prior to 70 C.E. This effectively excludes the New Testament, but the study lays the foundation for future inquiry into the presence and religious role of the divine council in the New Testament. The number of areas of New Testament study related to the divine council is extensive. An examination of the New Testament in light of the divine council paradigm proposed by this study would necessitate consideration

---

[6] Marjo Christina Annette Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine* (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1990); Lowell K. Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven: The Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureaucracy* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994); H. R. Page, *The Myth of Cosmic Rebellion: A Study of its Reflexes in Ugaritic and Biblical Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
[7] Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
[8] The Second Temple period is dated from the construction of Israel's second temple, ca. 516 B.C.E. to its destruction in 70 C.E.

of angel Christology, angelomorphic Christology, and Christian soteriology;[9] the question of monotheism and Christology in the "Pauline Shema" of I Cor 8:5-6;[10] the matter of Wisdom Christology;[11] the relationship of Michael and Christ traditions;[12] Johannine and Pauline theology of divine sonship, adoption, and glorification (apotheosis);[13] Paul's use of Yahweh texts from the Old Testament;[14] New Testament terminology for the heavenly host, namely "principalities" and "powers";[15] the divine council scene of Revelation 4-5;[16] the thorny "Son of Man" problem for New Testament studies;[17] and the relationship of 1 Enoch to the New Testament.[18]

1.2 *Introducing the Problems of the Consensus View of the Development of Israelite Monotheism*

Insuperable difficulties arise when scholars attempt to explain the textual realities of Second Temple period writings according to the consensus viewpoint on the origins of Israelite monotheism. For example, several of the most eloquent witnesses to a divine assembly in the Hebrew Bible are found in exilic and post-

---

[9] Angel Christology deals with the question of whether Jesus was an angel, while angelomorphic Christology is the idea that Jesus appeared as an angel. See Charles Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (AGJU 42; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998), 28. See also Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology, and Soteriology* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997); Richard Bauckham, "The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 43-69.

[10] Paul Rainbow, "Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6" (D. Phil. diss., Oxford University, 1987); James D. G. Dunn, "Was Christianity a Monotheistic Faith From the Beginning?" *SJT* 35 (1982): 303-336.

[11] Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Wisdom Christology and the Parting of the Ways Between Judaism and Christianity," in *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Brook W. R. Pearson; JSNTSup 192; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 52-68.

[12] Darrell D. Hannah, *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity* (WUNT 109; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1999).

[13] B. Byrne, *"Sons of God"—"Seed of Abraham": A Study of the Idea of the Sonship of God of All Christians in Paul Against the Jewish Background* (AnBib 83; Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1979); Olle Christofferson, *The Earnest Expectation of the Creature: The Flood Tradition as the Matrix of Romans 8:18-27* (ConBNT 32; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990); Harold Riesenfeld, "Sons of God and Ecclesia: An Intertestamental Analysis," in *Renewing the Judeo-Christian Wellsprings* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1987), 89-104; James Tabor, "Firstborn of Many Brothers: A Pauline Notion of Apotheosis," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1984* (ed. Kent Richards; SBLSP 21; Chico: Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), 295-303.

[14] David B. Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992).

[15] Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning, and Development of the Pauline Phrase* hai archai kai hai exousiai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Clinton Arnold, *Ephesians: Power and Magic* (SNTSMS 63; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); idem, *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters* (Downer's Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity, 1992); Andrew Chester, "Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology," in *Paulus und antike Judentum: Tübingen-Durham Symposium im Gedenken an den 50. Todestag Adolf Schlatters* (ed. Martin Hengel and Ulrich Heckel; WUNT 58; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991), 17-89.

[16] Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "An Angelic Refusal of Worship: The Tradition and Its Function in the Apocalypse of John," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1994* (ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr.; SBLSP 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 679-696; Margaret Barker, "Enthronement and Apotheosis: The Vision in Revelation 4-5," in *New Heaven and New Earth Prophecy and the Millennium: Studies in Honour of Anthony Gelston* (ed. P. J. Harland and C. T. R. Hayward; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 217-227; Cameron Afzal, "Wheels of Time: *Merkavah* Exegesis in Revelation 4," *SBL Seminar Papers, 1998* (2 vols.; SBLSP 37; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 1: 465-482; Peter R. Carrell, *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Matthew Black, "The Throne Theophany Prophetic Commission and the Son of Man: A Study in Tradition History," in *Jews, Greeks, and Christians: Religious Culture in Late Antiquity* (ed. R. G. Hamerton-Kelly and R. Scroggs; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 57-73.

[17] John J. Collins, "The Son of Man in First Century Judaism," *NTS* 38 (1992): 448-466.

[18] James C. VanderKam, "1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature," in *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (ed. James C. VanderKam and William Adler; CRINT 3.4; Assen/Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 33-101; Lawrence VanBeek, "1 Enoch Among Jews and Christians: A Fringe Connection?" in *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries*

exilic material (cf. Job 1-2; Ps 82). No study to date has sought to explain indications of a pre-exilic worldview that affirmed a divine council in these late canonical texts without presupposing that such references cannot be taken at face value. It is common for scholars to argue that indications of divine plurality were expunged from the text during and after the exile by zealous scribes enforcing the monotheistic innovation, yet this hardly explains the unambiguous references noted above which must have been overlooked by this alleged campaign. Other scholars have consequently suggested that these scribes deliberately used polytheistic ideas as an apologetic for monotheism.[19] This hermeneutic is both confusing and unnecessary, and given the rise of the belief in divine plurality in the Second Temple era, counter-productive. Still others have argued that, in Psalm 82 at least, Yahweh assumes a new role of sovereign god over the nations by sentencing the other gods to death.[20] This approach assumes that Israelite religion before the exile did not contain the idea that Yahweh was king over all the earth. However, the belief of Yahweh's kingship over the nations is a prominent feature in early Israelite poetry.[21] The linguistic connection between phrases in Ps 24: 7,10 (שְׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רָאשֵׁיכֶם וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ פִּתְחֵי עוֹלָם וְיָבוֹא מֶלֶךְ הַכָּבוֹד; "O gates, lift up your heads! Be lifted up, you everlasting doors, so the king of glory may come in!") and lines in the divine council scene of the Baal Cycle[22] has prompted scholars to note the theme of cosmic rule and posit that the psalm may date to either the 12th or 10th century B.C.E.[23] In like manner, Exod 15:18, a well known example of the earliest Hebrew poetry, contains the line יְהוָה יִמְלֹךְ לְעֹלָם וָעֶד ("Yahweh will reign forever and ever!"), a declaration of Yahweh's sovereignty.[24] As F.M. Cross notes, "The kingship of the gods is a common theme in early

---

(ed. Stanley E. Porter and Brook W. R. Pearson; JSNTSup 192; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 93-115.

[19] This latter method of interpretation can be found in Simon B. Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God – Psalm 82 as Myth and Liturgy," *RB* 102 (1995): 532-559.

[20] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48-49.

[21] Patrick D. Miller, "Israelite Religion," in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays* (ed. Patrick D. Miller; JSOTSup 267; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 166.

[22] *KTU* 1.2.i:20-30.

[23] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic,* 90-93; Freedman, "Who is Like Thee Among the Gods?," 317. Likewise the sevenfold voice of Yahweh in the psalm calls attention to its antiquity. See N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts* (2d ed.; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 296, n. 205; and John Day, "Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Hab 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6," *VT* 29:2 (1979): 143-151.

[24] One could argue that this sovereignty need not be global, but then one would be pressed to produce evidence from the Hebrew Bible that could identify exactly which parts of the known world over which Yahweh was not considered to reign in Israelite thought.

Mesopotamian and Canaanite epics. The common scholarly position that the concept of Yahweh as reigning or king is a relatively late development in Israelite thought seems untenable."[25]

A second example of the failings of the consensus approach is the presence of pre-exilic terms for divine plurality and the divine council in Second Temple literature, especially from Qumran.[26] One frequently finds scholars arguing that while terms such as אלהים, אלים and מלאכים in pre-exilic biblical texts describe distinct classes of heavenly beings, thereby distinguishing the council gods from angels, the same terms are not distinct in late canonical and Second Temple texts, so as to eliminate the gods from any belief in a heavenly council.[27] It is difficult to discern what else guides such a conclusion other than the preconception of a certain trajectory toward intolerant monotheism. Such reasoning unfortunately assumes what it seeks to prove: the word אלים in texts composed after the exile, the point at which Israel's intolerant monotheism emerged, cannot actually express a belief in the pre-exilic divine council, because that would result in henotheism or polytheism. Rather, the word must mean "angels," because that would *not* be henotheism or polytheism.[28]

As a third and final example, Second Temple literature exemplifies to a pervasive belief in exalted divine mediators, including a second enthroned "man" in heaven, often treated as a hypostasis of the God of Israel.[29] Divine plurality and hypostasized vice regency are features of the pre-exilic divine council.[30] No study

---

[25] Frank Moore Cross and David Noel Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975; repr. Grand Rapids: William. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 45, n. 59.

[26] There are approximately 175 references to plural אלהים / אלים (בני) in the Dead Sea Scrolls, frequently in the context of the divine council. See Chapter Seven of this study.

[27] This interpretive decision proceeds from two assumptions: (1) the Israelite council, like that of Ugarit, did indeed distinguish the plural אלהים / אלים (בני) from the מלאכים; and (2) the erasure of the gods of the council due to the advent of monotheism left only God and the angels for a divine council after the exile. See Chapters Two and Three for discussion of this question and its importance to this study.

[28] See the ensuing discussion for citations of scholars who employ this reasoning.

[29] Michael Fishbane, "Some Forms of Divine Appearance in Ancient Jewish Thought," in *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 261-270; James H. Charlesworth, "The Jewish Roots of Christology: The Discovery of the Hypostatic Voice," *SJT* 39 (1986): 19-41.

[30] The subject of a divine hypostasis and the controversy over hypostasis nomenclature is dealt with at length in several sources already cited in footnotes (see especially Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 36-45). Gieschen notes (p. 36) that the relationship of the מלאך יהוה and God in particular "brought the term hypostasis into use for the past century." He also notes that resistance to the term by scholars has resulted in preference for terminology like "personified divine attributes," but this language is "inadequate to describe the *independent identity* of divine attributes which is present in many texts and also in later exegesis of those texts" (p. 36). In ancient philosophical discourse the term originally meant "individual reality" but eventually came to mean "individual person." The term was placed into the scholarly discussion of Israelite religion by Helmer Ringgren, who accepted a qualified "personhood" meaning when he noted that, "in many cases, what we are dealing with here is merely a stylistic device, a substitue for the divine name and God's activity . . . however, the abstract concept becomes semi-autonomous, appearing as an almost independent entity, half personified . . . This process is called hypostatization" (Helmer Ringgren, *Israelite Religion* [trans. D. Green; London: SPCK, 1966], 309). Gieschen notes that the understanding of hypostasis as independent person has become "a prominent part of the vocabulary of several scholars researching mediator figures in Israelite religion, Samaritanism, early Christianity, and Rabbinism." He specifically references the work of his adviser

of the divine council to date has explored these late Jewish references to divine plurality and the second divine being who acts as God's hypostasized vice-regent. Neither has any study considered this material and insisted that the criteria for monotheism that disqualify pre-exilic Israelite religion from that categorization be applied to Second Temple Judaism.

This dissertation fills these voids. Against the backdrop of the lack of theological unanimity within Second Temple Judaism,[31] it can coherently be argued that the prevalence of a divine council in the Jewish literature of the period suggests that, for some strands of Judaism, the pre-exilic view of God and his heavenly host had changed very little by the first century C.E.

All of these subjects merit more specific attention to adequately contextualize this study. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to preparing the reader for the major issues that justify not only the conclusion that belief in the divine council survived into the Common Era, but that the divine council provides explanatory power for some vexing questions related to Israelite religion and later Jewish theology.

1.3 *Divine Plurality in Late Canonical Texts and Assumptions About Israelite Monotheism*

Scholarship on the divine council has resulted in several points of broad agreement. With respect to Ugarit, contrary to early studies, it is now widely agreed that the primacy of El was not compromised by the rise of Baal to kingship. The vast majority of Ugaritic scholars view Baal's kingship as operating under the authority of El as El's vizier or co-regent.[32] Scholars have put forth a convincing co-regent model operating

---

J. E. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism* (WUNT 36; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1985) and Alan Segal, whose work is of great relevance for this study (Alan F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven. Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977). Recent critics of hypostasis language include Arthur Gibson (*Biblical Semantic Logic: A Preliminary Analysis* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1981], 92-96) and James Barr ("Hypostatization of Linguistic Phenomena in Modern Theological Interpretation," *JSS* 7 [1962]: 85-92), but both object only to hypostatization of linguistic phenomena, not attributes given the proper context. For the sake of this study, it is recognized (with Gibson and Barr) that hypostasis is a legitimate category for divine discussion that needs close attention to linguistic context, but also that relegating hypostasis to mere figurative, literary descriptions of God's immanent activity is often exegetically inadequate. This study uses "hypostasis" to refer to "an aspect of deity that is depicted with independent personhood of varying degrees" (cf. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 45).

[31] There was considerable variation in Second Temple Judaism. See Gabriele Boccaccini, "Multiple Judaisms: A New Understanding of the Context of Earliest Christianity," *BR* 11 (F 1995): 38-41, 46; idem, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998); E. P. Sanders, The Dead Sea Sect and Other Jews: Commonalities, Overlaps and Differences," in *Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 7-43; Gary G. Porton, "Diversity in Postbiblical Judaism," in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 57-80; N. J. McEleney, "Orthodoxy in Judaism of the First Christian Century," *JSJ* 4 (1973): 19-42; idem, "Orthodoxy in Judaism in the First Christian Century," *JSJ* 9 (1978): 83-88; David E. Aune, "Orthodoxy in First Century Judaism. A Response to N. J. McEleney," *JSJ* 7 (1976): 1-10; L. L. Grabbe, "Orthodoxy in First Century Judaism. What Are the Issues?" *JSJ* 8 (1977): 149-153.

[32] See especially L'Heureux, *Rank Among the Canaanite Gods,* 10-25, and J. C. L. Gibson, "The Theology of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle," *Or* 53 (1984): 202-219 (esp. 207ff.). Chapter Two of the present study discusses the evidence for Baal's role as vice-regent.

between the two. Baal can be called “king” (*mlk*)[33] and can declare, “I alone it is who will rule over the gods” (*ʾaḥdy d ymlk ʿl ʾilm*),[34] yet Ugaritic religion also references El as “king” (*mlk*).[35] Baal, not El, is called “Most High” (*ʿly*)[36] at Ugarit, yet Baal is “begotten” by El and it is El’s prerogative to appoint successors to the kingship position when it is unoccupied.[37] Despite his exalted status, Baal does not have a house like other gods, and El’s permission must be solicited for one to be constructed.[38] In fact, the Baal Cycle describes El as having had other elevated co-regents, so that Baal’s kingship could be viewed as one of several successive occupations of a contested position.[39]

Further, it is the consensus of scholars that the Ugaritic (and larger Canaanite) council was the conceptual precursor to the Israelite version of the divine council.[40] As such, Israel’s council is thought to reflect a pre-exilic polytheistic bureaucracy that included the notion that the gods (or “sons of El/God”) exercised territorial control over the nations of the earth (Deut 32:8-9).[41] In this perspective, Yahweh and El

---

[33] *KTU* 1.3.V: 32; 1.4.IV: 43. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of Ugaritic texts come from Wyatt, *Religious Texts.*
[34] Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 111. *KTU* 1.4.vii:50.
[35] *KTU* 1.3.v:35-36.
[36] N. Wyatt, “The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God,” *UF* 24 (1992): 419.
[37] *KTU* 1.3.v:35-36; 1.4.iv:44-47; 1.6.i:45-65. El also appointed Yamm king prior to Baal’s victory (*KTU* 1.1.iv:13-32).
[38] *KTU* 1.4.iv-vi.
[39] *KTU* 1.1.iv:10-20. For example, tells us that Yamm was El’s son and was appointed by El as co-regent (*tgr*). See Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 48, n. 49. Wyatt notes that *KTU* 1.1.iv:24-25 suggests that prior to Baal’s rise to kingship, it may be that Baal had a prior claim to the position and had been passed over in favor of Yamm, whom he eventually replaces (Wyatt, *Religious Texts,* 49, n. 55).
[40] All of the studies on the divine council noted earlier take this view, but see especially Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 3-77; idem, *The Early History of God*, 145, n. 143; Simon B. Parker, "Sons of (the) God(s)," *DDD,* 794-798; idem, “Council,” *DDD,* 204-208; John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan* (JSOTSup 265; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 13-67.
[41] Reading Deut 32:8-9 with the LXX and Qumran material. Controversy over the text of this verse concerns the last phrase, “according to the number of the sons of Israel,” which reflects the reading of the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible (hereafter, MT), בני ישׂראל. The MT reading is also reflected in several later revisions of the LXX: a manuscript of Aquila (Codex X), Symmachus (also Codex X), and Theodotion (See Fridericus Field, ed., *Origenis Hexaplorum, Tomus I: Prolegomena, Genesis-Esther* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964), 320, n. 12). Most witnesses to the LXX in verse 8, however, read ἀγγελῶν θεοῦ, which is interpretive. See John William Wevers, ed., *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis Editum, vol. III,2: Deuteronomium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 347 (hereafter, *Göttingen Septuagint*); idem, *Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995, 513). Wevers refers to this majority reading as "clearly a later attempt to avoid any notion of lesser deities in favor of God's messengers" (*Notes on the Greek Text of Deuteronomy,* 513). Several LXX texts also read υἱῶν θεοῦ (see Chapter Eight of this study for comments on the LXX in important divine council passages). This latter Greek rendering presupposes a Hebrew text of either בני אלהים or בני אלים. The Hebrew phrases underlying ἀγγελῶν θεοῦ and υἱῶν θεοῦ are attested in two manuscripts from Qumran (4QDt^{j} and 4QDt^{q}) and by one (conflated) manuscript of Aquila (*Göttingen Septuagint,* 347; *Origenis Hexaplorum, Tomus I: Prolegomena, Genesis-Esther*, 320. The manuscript of Aquila is Codex 85). בני אל is not an option for what was behind the LXX reading, as the Qumran support for Hebrew text underlying the unrevised LXX demonstrates. First, 4QDt^{q} has spaces for additional letters following the ל of its [ ]בני אל. Second, 4QDt^{j} clearly reads בני אלוהים. See P. Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 156; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 269; J. Tigay, *Deuteronomy, The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 514-518; P. W. Skehan, “A Fragment of the ‘Song of Moses’ (Deut 32) from Qumran,” *BASOR* 136 (1954) 12-15; idem, “Qumran and the Present State of Old Testament Text Studies: The Masoretic Text,” *JBL* 78 (1959) 21; Julie Duncan, “A Critical Edition of Deuteronomy Manuscripts from Qumran, Cave IV. 4QDt ^{b}, 4QDt ^{e}, 4QDt ^{h}, 4QDt ^{j}, 4QDt ^{b}, 4QDt ^{k}, 4QDt ^{l},” (Ph.D.

were separate deities in Israelite religion, the former being the son of the latter.[42] The members of the divine council under El each ruled a specific region of the earth, and Yahweh, in this view, was given the nation of Israel as his domain. Eventually, according to most scholars of the subject, El and Yahweh were fused (along with Baal), and the divine council disappeared as Israelite religion achieved the breakthrough to monotheism. An alleged editorial agenda driven by monotheistic priests and scribes during and after the exile enforced and assured this religious transition via their work on the final redaction of the Hebrew Bible as it stood by that time.[43]

In speaking of a breakthrough to monotheism, scholars are expressing either the culmination of an evolutionary process that moved Israel away from polytheism, or a sudden innovation that accomplished the same.[44] But while scholars agree that pre-exilic Israelite religion was not monotheistic, there has been considerable debate over how to best characterize the nature of this early religion. On the one hand it might seem that the obvious alternative is polytheism, since the existence of other gods is assumed in the concept of the divine council and therefore embedded in early Israelite canonical literature.[45] The archaeological record provides abundant evidence that other gods were worshipped in Israel, and some scholars consider the controversial finds from Kuntillet ʿAjrûd and Khirbet el-Qôm as evidence that Yahwistic religion in Israel included a consort.[46]

---

diss., Harvard University, 1989); Eugene Ulrich et al., eds., *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy to Kings* (DJD XIV; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 75-79.

[42] Two current examples of this perspective are Mark S. Smith, *Origins of Biblical* Monotheism, 48-49, 156 and Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 532-559. Smith in fact had identified El and Yahweh in Deut 32:8-9 and Psalm 82 in his first edition of *The Early History of God*. He changed his position in the second edition. According to my research, a small minority of scholars disagree with this dichotomy. See Chapters Two and Three of the present study.

[43] Robert Karl Gnuse, *No Other Gods: Emergent Monotheism in Israel* (JSOTSup 241; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 201-205.

[44] The history of the scholarship on Israel's religion is sketched and summarized by Gnuse, *No Other Gods, 5-150* and by Patrick D. Miller, "Israelite Religion," 142-181; idem, "God and the Gods: History of Religion as an Approach and Context for Bible and Theology," in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays* (ed. Patrick D. Miller; JSOTSup 267; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 365-396.

[45] For example, Exod 15:11; 20:1-6; Jdg 11:23-24; Ps 29:1. See Freedman, "Who is Like Thee Among the Gods?" 315-336; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God*, 1-60; Michael David Coogan, "Canaanite Origins and Lineage: Reflections on the Religion of Ancient Israel," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 115-124; Norbert Lohfink, "The Cult Reform of Josiah of Judah: 2 Kings 22-23 as a Source for the History of Israelite Religion," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 459-476.

[46] P. Kyle McCarter, "Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 137-156; William G. Dever, "The Contribution of Archaeology to the Study of Canaanite and Early Israelite Literature," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross* (ed. Patrick D. Miller, et al.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 209-248; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God*, 108-181.

On the other hand, pre-exilic declarations of Yahweh's incomparability among the gods (e.g., Exod 15:11) and various prohibitions against worshipping these gods have prompted many scholars to see pre-exilic Israelite religion as henotheistic or monolatrous. Henotheism, defined succinctly, is the belief in many gods alongside the "belief in one god, presiding over the other, no longer supreme gods."[47] Monolatry is intolerant henotheism, where the acceptance of one supreme god turns to the insistence that only the supreme god be worshipped.[48] Monotheism is in turn defined as the exclusion of other gods; that is, "[it] differs from those views that accept a plurality of divine beings."[49] Monotheism, then, amounts to the denial of the existence of other gods. As Mark S. Smith states: "Monotheistic exclusivity is not simply a matter of cultic observance, as in the First Commandment's prohibition against 'no other gods before me' in Exod 20:3 and Deut 5:7. It extends further to an understanding of deities in the cosmos (no other gods, period). . . . Statements of incomparability are not included; such hyperbole is known also in Mesopotamian texts."[50] Smith's statement succinctly distinguishes the differences between henotheism, monolatry, and monotheism. It is also an acknowledgement that statements of incomparability do not constitute monotheism, as he correctly points out that polytheistic religions contain such language. But by this very definition and its qualifications, should post-exilic Judaism be categorized as monotheistic?

As noted above, the vast majority of scholars, in agreement with Smith, posit that monotheism in Israel was initially hinted at in Deuteronomy, dated to the time of Josiah (ca. 640-609 B.C.E.). After the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of the exile of Israel in Babylon (586 B.C.E.), a religious revolution occurred. According to the dominant view of the monotheistic emergence, "the exile provoked a crisis in Israelite Yahwistic religion" that led to its reformulation.[51] In view of the defeat of Israel by pagan nations and their gods, it is thought that Israel's religious leaders were forced to deny the existence of other gods, so as to attribute their situation to the judgment of Yahweh alone—in denial of the notion that Yahweh had been defeated by another nation's deity. Deutero-Isaiah, composed on the cusp of the release from exile (539 B.C.E.)

---

47 Michiko Yusa, "Henotheism," *ER* 6:266.
48 Ibid.
49 Theodore M. Ludwig, "Monotheism," *ER* 10: 69; Yusa, "Henotheism," *ER* 6:266.
50 Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 151, 279, n. 20.
51 Bob Becking, "Continuity and Discontinuity After the Exile," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times* (ed. Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel; *OtSt* 42; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 4.

reflects this shift in thinking most lucidly, according to the majority construct. The biblical books of Joshua through 2 Kings, also composed in the days preceding and during the exile, were wedded to Deuteronomy to form the Deuteronomistic History.[52] This material also contains hints of opposition to other gods. Taken collectively, it is in this literature that scholars detect what are considered denials of the existence of other gods—statements that "there is no other god besides Yahweh"—and so a development toward exclusivistic monotheism appears intelligible.

There are a number of problems with this reconstruction and its assumptions. Since scholarship on the divine council began, all scholars who have discussed the subject at length have noted that the most explicit references to a divine assembly in the Hebrew Bible are found in late canonical texts such as Psalm 82, Job 1 and 2, and Zech 3:1-7. These texts, dating to the exile or afterward, are also regarded as the most transparent parallels to the Ugaritic council.[53] For sake of clarity, I am not speaking here of the passages in late canonical texts that *describe* enduring polytheistic practices in Israel.[54] The reference is to those texts that reflect a worldview held by the exilic and post-exilic writer-redactor(s) that is consistent with pre-exilic affirmation of the divine council and divine plurality. Given the assumed emergence of monotheism and the editorial campaign conducted by those in power to ensure the sacred literature would reflect monotheism, these descriptions of a council of gods are quite out of place.

Second, scholars have frequently noted that in both the Dtr and Deuteronomy there are no categorical denials of the existence of all other deities, the issue in both literary works being the centralization of the cult in Jerusalem as a link to the promise to David.[55] The Dtr's account of Elijah's reforms and Jehu's rebellion informs the reader that the priests of Asherah were not killed with those who served Baal, nor were the golden calves, asherim, and other objects removed.[56] Even the *Shema* ʿ need not be construed as a declaration of monotheism.[57]

---

[52] Hereafter, both "Deuteronomist" and "Deuteronomistic" are abbreviated as Dtr.
[53] See Chapters Three and Five for discussion of these texts and others.
[54] Susan Ackerman, *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth Century Judah* (HSM 46; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).
[55] Norbert Lohfink, "The Cult Reform of Josiah of Judah," 468; Gnuse, *No Other Gods,* 206.
[56] Ibid., 202.
[57] See Nathan MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'* (FAT, Reihe 2; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2003), 60-75; C. L. Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 138-141. Labuschagne comments on the *Shema*: "We may conclude that the exclusiveness of the confession, יהוה אחד, is not the result of monotheistic thought, but the

In Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9 the issue goes beyond a lack of denial to the affirmation of the existence of other gods.[58] These two passages are not observations of fringe beliefs in Israel, but are important elements to the larger theology of the Hebrew Bible's articulation of the adversarial relationship between Israel and the nations that consumes much of the Dtr. Taken together they describe the allotment of the "host of heaven" to the other nations as their gods (4:19-20) and the placement of the nations under those gods (32:8-9).[59]

Scholars have long noticed the vocabulary used in both texts overlaps considerably,[60] and that Deut 32:8-9 is one of the most significant passages in the Hebrew Bible with respect to Israel's early acceptance of other gods.[61] Some scholars resist seeing Deut 4:19-20 as evincing the same polytheistic (or monolatrous) worldview, but Sanders' comments are compelling:

> One of the clearest parallels of Deut 32:8-9 in the Hebrew Bible can be found in Deut 4:19-20, where Moses tells that YHWH once allotted (חלק; cf. Deut 32:9 and 29:25) "the host of heaven" (צבא השמים) to the peoples (עמים) but kept the people of Israel as [an inheritance] נחלה for himself. It is absolutely clear that gods beside YHWH are meant by this heavenly host, consisting of the stars; cf. 29:25.[62]

Sanders' reference to Deut 29:25 (Hebrew) is noteworthy in that this text explicitly refers to Israel's crime of worshipping other gods that Yahweh had not *allotted* (חלק) to them: "They turned to the service of other gods and worshipped them, gods whom they had not experienced and whom He [YHWH] had not allotted

---

result of Moses' work, as well as Israel's experience in history that Yahweh is incomparable . . . When Israel, therefore, confesses in the *Shema* that Yahweh, '*our* God', is the Single One, she expresses at the same time that she owes undivided loyalty to Him alone, for He is the only One for her. The qualification of Yahweh as *'our* God' in the confession is indispensable, for it witnesses the very personal relation between Israel and Yahweh" (emphasis is the author's). An understanding of the *Shema* in terms of Yahweh's incomparability among the gods rather than as a rejection of the other gods' existence is consistent with Deuteronomy's other statements that affirm a worldview that contains other gods (4:19-20; 32:8-9,12). Cynthia L. Miller's discussion of the verbless clause of Deut 6:4 briefly describes five possible translations of the *Shema*, none of which produces a denial of the existence of other gods. See Cynthia L. Miller, "Pivotal Issues in Analyzing the Verbless Clause," in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches* (ed. Cynthia L. Miller and M. O'Connor; *Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic* 1; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 3-5.

[58] See footnote 27 for the validation of the LXX and Qumran readings in Deut 32:8.

[59] Many scholars consider Deuteronomy 32 to be a composite. In the most recent (and exhaustive) study of this question, P. Sanders concludes ". . . a pre-exilic date is extremely likely for a very large part of the song. In the rest of the song nothing appears to contradict a pre-exilic dating . . . [w]e draw the conclusion that the song is a unity of composition dating from the pre-exilic period" (Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 429). Sanders spends two hundred pages analyzing the song's colography, accentual patterns, and its micro- and macro-structures. One of his resulting arguments is that if the verses for which a pre-exilic date has been denied by scholars are removed from the song, the structure of the sub-cantos becomes quite irregular. For the purposes of this study, if the song is pre-exilic, then scholars should have no trouble affirming that it describes a monolatrous worldview. If only part of it is pre-exilic with subsequent additions, those who reworked the text to incorporate these additions had every opportunity to either remove the references to other gods or utilize such references for some rhetorical purpose to prop up an intolerant monotheism. Neither option can be demonstrated from the final form of the text.

[60] Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 363-367.

[61] In addition to the noted items from Mark S. Smith and Simon B. Parker, see P. Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 68-80, 426-430.

to them."[63] Deuteronomy 29's indictment of Israel points to a violation of the religious and cosmic boundaries drawn by Yahweh in Deut 4:19-20—the other gods, the host of heaven, are meant for the other nations, not Israel. This establishes that the host of heaven in Deut 4:19-20 refers not just to celestial phenomena but to other gods. This is in harmony with the scholarly studies of astronomical terminology in the Hebrew Bible that Israelite religion, like other ancient religions of Canaan and the Near East, understood celestial bodies to be divine beings.[64] In fact, many canonical texts that identify stars as divine beings are late.[65] It is also noteworthy that this same "host of heaven" appears in a classic divine council scene in Dtr, 1 Kgs 22:17-23. If a redactional campaign was waged during the exile in the name of intolerant monotheism, it was shockingly careless.

Equally incongruous for the consensus reconstruction are the references to a divine council and its members in Deutero-Isaiah.[66] Scholars have long noted the council context of divine commands issued as plural imperatives and Deutero-Isaiah's use of divine council motifs.[67] As B. Sommer has detailed in his work on intertextuality, Deutero-Isaiah also makes use of Psalm 82 and its divine council scene.[68] Although widely considered the model of monotheistic expression in the Hebrew Bible, all the alleged denials of the existence of other gods (e.g., "there is no god beside me") in Deutero-Isaiah are expressed in the vocabulary and syntax of Deuteronomy 4 and 32.[69] If the juxtaposition of affirmations of the existence of other gods alongside declarations that there are no gods beside Yahweh in Deuteronomy is considered by many scholars as indicating a belief in Yahweh's incomparability, on what ground do those same phrases constitute exclusivistic monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah? In other words, the phrases themselves are not proof that the writer denies the

---

[62] P. Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 363-364. Bracketed information is inserted by this writer.
[63] The translation is from the *JPS Tanakh* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999). Bracketed information is inserted by this writer. For other comments on Deut 4:19-20 as the Hebrew Bible's explanation for polytheism among the nations, see J. Tigay, *Deuteronomy,* 433-436.
[64] See J. McKay, *Religion in Judah Under the Assyrians* (SBT, 2d Series, 26; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 50-51; Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 563-568; I. Zatelli, "Constellations," *DDD,* 202-204; idem, "Astrology and the Worship of the Stars in the Bible," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 86-99.
[65] See Job 38:7-8; 1 Kgs 22:19; Deut 17:3; Jer 8:2; 19:13; Dan 8:10-11; Neh 9:6. The idea survived into the first century C.E. as witnessed by Second Temple literature (see Chapter Eight) and was known in the New Testament (Luke 2:13; Acts 7:42-43: Rev 1:20; 12:1-4). For the Ugaritic corollary texts, see *KTU* 1.10:3-5: *bn ʾl* ("sons of Ilu/El") || *pḫr kkbm* ("assembly of the stars") || *dr dt šmm* ("race of heaven"); *KTU* 1.19.IV:23-25, 29-31: *ʾlm* ("gods") || *šmym* ("celestial ones") || *kbkbm* ("stars").
[66] For example, Isa 40:1-9. See Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," 279-286; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109:2 (1990): 229-247; M. E. Polley, "Hebrew Prophecy Within the Council of Yahweh Examined in its Ancient Near Eastern Setting," in *Scripture in Context: Essays in the Comparative Method.* (ed. C. D. Evans, W.W. Hallo, and J.B. White; PTMS 34; Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1980), 141-156.
[67] Frank Moore Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," *JNES* 12 (1953): 274-277
[68] Benjamin Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1998).
[69] See Chapter Four of this study for treatment of this issue.

existence of other gods. It is simply not coherent to argue Deutero-Isaiah's declarations reflect religious innovation when the very same language is used in pre-exilic texts that are overwhelmingly regarded by biblical scholars as not denying the existence of other gods.

The tension between the common definition of monotheism and these data points is clear. If Smith's definition is on target, and it certainly represents the thinking of a majority of biblical scholars, it appears that the final writer-redactors of Job, Psalm 82, Deuteronomy 4 and 32, and Deutero-Isaiah cannot be considered monotheists. Indeed, one must either affirm that the relevant phrases in Deuteronomy actually denote monotheism (but then what of the other gods?) or demonstrate conclusively that these same phrases in Deutero-Isaiah *cannot* be statements of incomparability. One wonders on what basis such certainty could be achieved.

When scholars have addressed this tension, terms like "inclusive monotheism" or "tolerant monolatry" have been coined in an attempt to accurately classify Israelite religion in both pre- and post-exilic stages.[70] These terms have not found acceptance among many scholars. The frustration over nomenclature is due to the fact that "monotheism" is a modern term, appropriated and popularized by deists during the Enlightenment, applied to the ancient Israelite belief system.[71] As studies of the origin and development of the term show, "monotheism" was initially not meant as an antonym to "polytheism" but to "atheism."[72] Such a distant understanding would accommodate the phenomenon of the Israelite divine council. In the context of more recent usage, reflected in Smith's comments, a divine council of inferior gods subservient to the incomparable Yahweh is understandably excluded.

As the effort at coining new terms or modifiers for monotheism shows, scholars have attempted to redefine or nuance the term in light of the features of late exilic and post-exilic texts. One might correctly object that these texts consistently condemn worship of any other god, perhaps even a divine hypostasis, yet this is the very definition of pre-exilic *monolatry*, where worship was reserved for Yahweh alone. Another problem with this proposal is that acceptance—not just worship—of a divine hypostasis became the specific target of the rabbis who wanted to censor the "two powers in heaven" idea.

[70] For these terms and their discussion, see Gnuse, *No Other Gods,* 5-128; Juha Pakkala, *Intolerant Monotheism in the Deuteronomistic History,* (Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 76; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 1-20, 224-233; MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'*, 21-71.
[71] MacDonald, *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'*, 1-21.

Some scholars have argued for an "incipient monotheism" that could perhaps include the affirmation of other gods who were inferior. There is precedent for this idea in the scholarly exchanges over henotheism, monolatry, and Israelite religion. Historically, henotheism assumes all gods are species equals and the elevation of one god is due to socio-political factors—not theological nuancing. Quoting Max Müller's seminal work on the subject, M. Yusa writes that henotheism was a technical term coined "to designate a peculiar form of polytheism . . . [where] each god is, 'at the time a real divinity, supreme and absolute' not limited by the powers of any other gods."[73] Müller called this idea "belief in single gods . . . a worship of one god after another."[74] T. J. Meek referred to pre-exilic Israelite religion as both henotheistic and monolatrous,[75] thereby equating the two, based on the prohibition of worshipping other gods. H. H. Rowley, reacting to the work of Meek, articulated the above idea of uniqueness. What distinguished Mosaic religion in his mind from that of other "henotheists" was "not so much the teaching that Yahweh was to be the only God for Israel as the proclamation that Yahweh was unique."[76] For Rowley, what distinguished pre-exilic religion from exclusivistic monotheism was universalism, the belief that all should worship the one god. He acknowledged that Yahweh could act in foreign lands (cf. the exodus), but referred to this only as "incipient universalism" and thus "incipient monotheism."[77]

Taking the idea of Yahweh's uniqueness even further, it could perhaps be argued that assertions of incomparability amount to the affirmation that other gods were *ontologically* inferior to a "species-unique" being. Yahweh is distinguished as the creator of all other gods, the pre-existent One, making him ontologically distinct. By virtue of ontological superiority, Yahweh alone is sovereign and thus deserving of worship. One could object that the idea of "species uniqueness" is unintelligible with respect to divine beings, perhaps by analogy to the human world. I am human, yet no other human is me, but all humans share the same species status. Hence one can be unique in properties, which reflects the view of Rowley and others, but *species* uniqueness is a fallacy. The analogy with humankind is flawed, however, since no such claim as pre-existence

---

[72] Ibid.
[73] Yusa, "Henotheism," *ER* 6:266. Yusa is quoting from F. Max Müller, *Selected Essays on Language, Mythology, and Religion*, vol. 2 (1881; repr. New York: AMS Press, 1978), 136-137.
[74] Yusa, "Henotheism," *ER* 6:266.
[75] T. J. Meek, "Monotheism and the Religion of Israel," *JBL* 61 (1942): 21-43.
[76] H. H. Rowley, "Moses and Monotheism," in *From Moses to Qumran: Studies in the Old Testament* (New York: Association Press, 1963), 45.
[77] Ibid., 60-61. Rowley does not interact with the early dating of Psalms 24 and 29, which speak of Yahweh's global kingship. See Chapter Three of this study.

before all humans is seriously offered. This is not the case with Israelite religion. To Israel, Yahweh was unique. The claim that there was "none like Yahweh" was frequently made. In view of the fact that Yahweh is credited with creating and commanding everything in heaven and earth—the "universe" in Israelite thought[78]—it is plausible that Israelites believed that Yahweh is indeed an *ʾelohim*, but no other *ʾelohim*—whom Yahweh created—are Yahweh. One can only have a single source of *all else* in heaven and earth that is. Interestingly, species uniqueness is the basis for God's distinction from the other gods in later Jewish writers.[79] The outcome of this particular attempt at redefining monotheism would be "mono-Yahwism," but this is not monotheism by modern definition since the existence of other gods is still assumed. It is, however, probably the closest term to capturing pre-exilic Israelite belief about its incomparable god, Yahweh, who created the other gods.[80]

Despite scholarly attempts to nuance the meaning of monotheism, none of these efforts can accommodate both the meaning of this admittedly modern term and an affirmation of other gods in Israel's religion, whatever their level of inferiority to Yahweh. The only discernible difference between the terms "monolatry" and "mono-Yahwism" is that the latter sees Yahweh as a species-unique being, while the former does not. Both allow for a divine council of lesser gods under Yahweh. Since late canonical texts evince a divine council congruent with pre-exilic Israelite religion, this study posits that Israelite religion after the exile and into the Common Era was monolatry.[81]

1.4 *The Problem of Divine Plurality in Second Temple Jewish Literature*

The preceding discussion makes clear that modern scholarship insists that the existence of more than one "deity class" being rules out monotheism. Smith's concise definition above certainly articulates this well. Such a religion would either be classified as henotheism or monolatry, no matter how inferior the surrounding deities or how consistently the worship of any lesser deity is forbidden. This discussion also raises an important

---

[78] Luis I. J. Stadelman, *The Hebrew Conception of the World: A Philological and Literary Study* (AnBib 39; Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1970).

[79] For example, 2 (Slavonic) Enoch (J) 2:2 affirms that while other gods are feckless, they exist and are temporary: "And do not turn away from the Lord, and worship vain gods, gods who did not create the heaven and the earth or any created thing; for they will perish, and so will those who worship them." The same book later has God inform Enoch that, "There is no adviser and no successor to my creation. I am self-eternal and not made by hands" (33:4). *Sibylline Oracles* confess that "God is alone, unique, and supreme" since he is "self-generated [and] unbegotten." Yet in the same text one reads that, "if gods beget and yet remain immortal, there would have been more gods born than men." See John John J. Collins, "Sibylline Oracles, Fragments," *OTP* 1:470 (the citations are from Fragment 1:16; Fragment 2:1; Fragment 3:4).

[80] Pss 33:6; 148:1-5; Neh 9:6.

question: Should not the criteria that disqualify Israelite religion from monotheism be consistently applied to later expressions of Judaism?

Scholarship to date has established that the “two powers in heaven” controversy grew out of indications of divine plurality in the Hebrew Bible. As Segal notes, “the basic heresy involved interpreting scripture to say that a principal angelic or hypostatic manifestation in heaven was equivalent to God.”[82] Other scholars have made similar observations, namely that the rabbinic polemic of late antiquity against two powers in heaven arose from "rabbinic unease about much material in the Hebrew Bible which seemed too close to paganism for comfort."[83]

Segal’s work details the texts in the Hebrew Bible that Second Temple writers understood as casting Yahweh in human form, manifesting a hypostasis of Yahweh, or describing a “second divine man” ruling alongside Yahweh. It is significant that pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic texts alike are among the most frequently cited in defense of the idea of a “second power” in heaven: Gen 18; Exod 24:9ff.; Ezek 1:26; Dan 7:9ff. The point of the observation is that exilic and post-exilic material was not interpreted by Second Temple writers in such a way as to discourage or disallow divine plurality or a divine council. To these writers, there was a worldview continuity encompassing all these texts. The “antiquated” divine council of early Israel had not been set aside. In point of fact, the second power in heaven was not considered heretical by Jewish authorities until the second century C.E.[84]

This study argues that the "unease" in the rabbinic Judaism of late antiquity stems from the assimilation of divine council motifs from the Hebrew Bible into Second Temple Jewish religion. This study further argues that the vice regency feature of the Israelite divine council—expressed in the Hebrew Bible as various hypostases of Yahweh—is an adaptation of the co-regency of El and Baal. The co-regency of Yahweh and his vice-regent in turn provides the context and rationale for the second power in heaven concept so pervasive in Second Temple Jewish literature. This slight shift—that Yahweh’s vice-regent was an extension of His own

---

[81] This author understands this monolatry as the “mono-Yahwism” described above.
[82] Alan F. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, x.
[83] Peter Hayman, "Monotheism - A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?" *JJS* 42:1 (Spring 1991): 12.
[84] One of the more important observations of recent scholarship on the “two powers in heaven” controversy is that the second power was *not* an opposing power, as in Zoroastrianism, but a complementary power (A. Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, x, 260ff.).

essence—allowed for the Canaanite idea of a high God and a divine co-ruler to be retained without violation of the *Shema*. This allowance was understood and sustained well into the Common Era.

Scholars of Second Temple Judaism generally agree that Second Temple Judaism is only comprehensible given such a construct. It is apparent from the data that Jews of this era saw no contradiction or insurmountable difficulty in reserving worship to one deity who had no species equal while accepting the divine status of other heavenly beings, including a second enthroned ruling power in heaven. In the discussion above, I have called this monolatry, or "mono-Yahwism" with a vice-regent. Many scholars of first century Judaism, however, consider this species-unique "mono-Yahwism" to in fact be monotheism on ancient terms. L. Hurtado's comments are representative:

> It is mistaken to assume that we can evaluate ancient Jewish texts and beliefs in terms of whether or how closely they meet our preconceived idea of 'pure' monotheism. Unless we proceed inductively, we almost unavoidably import a definition from the sphere of theological polemics in an attempt to do historical analysis. . . . If we are to avoid *a priori* definitions and the imposition of our own theological judgments, we have no choice but to accept as monotheism the religion of those who profess to be monotheists, however their religion varies and may seem 'complicated' with other beings in addition to the one God . . . [we must not] seek to answer the question almost entirely on the basis of semantic arguments about the meaning of honorific titles or phrases, without always studying adequately how Jews practised [sic] their faith. . . . The characteristic willingness of Graeco-Roman Jews to endure the opprobrium of non-Jews over their refusal to worship other deities, even to the point of martyrdom, seems to me to reflect a fairly 'strict monotheism' expressed in fairly powerful measures.[85]

Hurtado's comments point to the key issue which, for him and other scholars, justifies retaining the term monotheism: first century Jews refused to worship any other deity but Yahweh. In this redefinition of the modern understanding of monotheism, these scholars reflect the same wish to retain the term evident among scholars of Israelite religion who take the points of dissonance in the data of that field seriously. While this attempted redefinition is vulnerable to criticism since it is actually the definition of monolatry, Hurtado's observations are still important. Dealing with the data on their own terms is absolutely necessary.

Unfortunately, relatively few scholars have allowed the data of Second Temple period texts to be interpreted without imposing the grid of the accepted consensus view of the development of monotheism. Finding scholars who raise the question asked above—whether Second Temple Judaism would meet the same

criteria for monotheism as pressed upon earlier Israelite religion—is rare. There is no shortage of examples from which to illustrate how the consensus assumption of the evolution of monotheism influences the interpretation of Second Temple material.

Two illustrations demonstrate the legitimacy of this study’s insistence that the litmus tests for monotheism be consistently applied.

First, if the divine council had ceased to exist in Israelite religion by the end of the exile, how does one account for the roughly 175 references in the Qumran material to multiple אלהים and (בני) אלים? How are explicit references to the “divine council / council of El” (עדת אל) and the “council of the gods” (אלוהים / עדת אלים or סוד אלים / אלוהים) in these same texts to be understood? Why are these exact phrases understood as referring to polytheistic leanings in pre-exilic canonical literature, but redefined after the exile? Moreover, how can the presumed downgrading of the pre-exilic gods of the divine council to servant angels account for a Second Temple heavenly hierarchy that retained the worldview of territorial control by divine beings?[86]

Mark S. Smith asserts that later Israelite monotheism, as represented by Second Isaiah, "reduced and modified the sense of divinity attached to angels" so that words like אלים in the Dead Sea Scrolls must refer to mere angels or heavenly powers "rather than full-fledged deities."[87] Whybray likewise feels compelled to note that by the Second Temple era, "the heavenly council had reached its final stage of development," and that the council members "are to all intents and purposes the angels of later Jewish literature."[88] L. Handy also confidently states that “by the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls . . . the word אלהים was used even by

---

[85] Larry Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," *JSNT* 71 (1998): 5-6.

[86] The reference here is to Daniel 10, among other Second Temple passages. Specifically, scholars have recognized for some time that the “princes” over the nations in Daniel and associated terminology (“Prince of the host”, “Prince of princes”) reflect the worldview of Deut 32:8-9. Significantly, the latter titles are linked by parallelism to each other and Daniel 11 to the highest tier of the council, a tier above the princes. As scholars have frequently noted, in Second Temple literature, the princes of Daniel were referred to as archangels. However, the controversial but oft-repeated supposition that Michael is to be identified with the Prince of Princes / Prince of the host lacks coherence since Michael is a member of the archangel (prince) class and is never placed in the highest tier of the council. This oversight has led to a number of difficulties in Second Temple angelology. For interaction with the relevant texts and secondary literature, see Chapters Six and Eight of the present study.

[87] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 47-51.

[88] R. N. Whybray, *The Heavenly Counsellor in Isaiah XL 13-14: A Study of the Sources of the Theology of Second Isaiah* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 82.

contemporary authors to mean 'messengers,' or what we call 'angels', when it was not used to refer to Yahweh . . . these אלהים, previously understood as deities, had come to be understood as angels."[89]

Whence does this assurance emerge? How does one actually know that when a late-era Jewish writer used the word אלים he was not referencing a worldview consistent with that of pre-exilic Israelite religion? An examination of the documentation offered by the above scholars reveals that these conclusions are drawn on the basis of the work of Maxwell J. Davidson and Carol Newsom.[90] While noting the quality of their work, such conclusions are without foundation, since both authors assume *a priori* that the language of deity now refers to angels and not a divine council of gods.

This assumed shift in meaning lacks textual support. An analysis of Davidson's terminological chart (which utilizes Newsom's study) at the end of his book demonstrates the validity of this contention and its implications.[91] A tagged computer search of the Dead Sea Scrolls database reveals there are no lines from *any* Qumran text where a "deity class" term (אלהים / אלים [בני]) for a member of the heavenly host overlaps with the word מלאכים. In fact, there are only eleven instances in the entire Qumran corpus where אלוהים / אלים [בני] and מלאכים occur within fifty words of each other.[92] Eight of these occurrences have אלוהים as referring to the singular God of Israel.[93] The three instances that remain do not clearly evince a semantic overlap of the terms due to their fragmentary or obscure nature. Given the data it would be difficult to argue on the basis of textual evidence that a Jewish writer of the post-exilic or Second Temple period understood the terms אלהים / אלים [בני] and מלאכים as being completely interchangeable, as scholars today regularly assume.[94]

---

89 Lowell K. Handy, "One Problem Involved in Translating to Meaning: An Example of Acknowledging Time and Tradition," *SJOT* 10:1 (1996): 19.

90 Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1-36; 72-108 and Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (JSPSup 11; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Carol A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. A Critical Edition* (HSM 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985).

91 Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, 356ff.

92 This statement reflects searches in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library (CD-ROM),* ed. Timothy H. Lim in consultation with Philip S. Alexander (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997). The eleven instances where אלוהים / אלים [בני] and מלאכים occur within fifty words of each other are: 1Q28b (1QSb), col. IV; 4Q225, frg. 2, col. II; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II; 4Q405 frg. 19ABCD, line 7; 4Q405 frg. 20-21-22, col. II; 4Q405 frg. 23, col. I; 4Q510, frg. 1; 4Q511, frg. 2, col. I; 4Q511, frg. 10; 4Q511 frg. 35.

93 1Q28b (1QSb), col. IV; 4Q225, frg. 2, col. II; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II; 4Q510, frg. 1; 4Q511, frg. 2, col. I; 4Q511, frg. 10; 4Q511 frg. 35.

94 Again, see Chapters Three and Five for a brief discussion of the assumptions underlying the consensus denial of the retention of the

Second, material from Qumran and other Second Temple period sources unmistakably speak of a second deity-level co-regent alongside the God of Israel, albeit under his ultimate sovereignty. 11QMelchizedek identifies the singular אלוהים of the divine council scene in Ps 82:1 as Melchizedek, not Yahweh. The writings of Philo transparently espouse a second divine being in the Hebrew Bible—that Yahweh had a vice-regent. Philo refers to "two Gods," which was "a synonym for 'two powers' in rabbinic thought."[95] He also calls certain angels divine, refers to the Logos as "God" (θϵός) and a "second God" (δϵύτϵρον θϵόν), and positively associates the Logos with the second power in heaven.[96] Eusebius "credits Philo with the term 'second God,' denoting the Logos."[97] Philo was very careful, however, to note that the Logos was not the God of Israel Himself but rather the visible form of Yahweh. The fact that Philo "nowhere seeks to defend these beliefs against a charge of heresy" creates the distinct impression that Philo was not departing from Jewish orthodoxy, and that his teachings on the Logos met with no objections.[98] While this is an argument from silence, it is not without force, as other scholars have pointed out:

> . . . [R]esearch into the sociology of knowledge indicates that when objections are raised against one's belief system, that belief system or worldview must be defended or legitimated. . . . This is not to be explained by the lack of any universally recognized authority which could speak for Jewish "orthodoxy" in this period. Even within the context of first century Jewish diversity, parties in conflict with one another took seriously the objections of their opponents and sought to respond to them. . . .[99]

Another example comes from the first century C.E. apocalyptic work, *The Apocalypse of Abraham*, where readers encounter the angel Yahoel, who bears the divine name and tells Abraham about "the ineffable Name that is dwelling in me."[100] This language is drawn from Exod 23:20-23, where the מלאך יהוה is distinguished from all other heavenly beings in the Hebrew Bible due to the presence of the divine Name. As

---

council gods after the exile.

[95] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 159. The Philo passage is *Som.* i, 227ff.

[96] For the Logos as "God," see *Som*. i, 230ff. For the term "second God" who is the Logos, see *QG 2,*62. These passages are discussed by Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 159-181.

[97] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven,* 164. The passage in Eusebius is *P.E.* VII, 13, 1.

[98] James McGrath and Jerry Truex, " 'Two Powers' and Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism," (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Denver, CO), 2 [cited 1 January 2003]. Online: http://www.iwu.edu/~religion/ejcm/McGrath_SBL_2001_TwoPowers.htm.

[99] Ibid., 2. The authors cite Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Penguin, 1966), 110-146. With respect to inner-Jewish polemic in early Judaism, see Luke T. Johnson, "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *JBL* 108 (1989): 436-441.

[100] *Apoc. Ab.* 10. See Alan Segal, "Some Observations about Paul and Intermediaries" (paper presented at the Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins, Philadelphia, PA, February 4, 1988), 14 [cited 1 January 2003]. Online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/psco/year25/8802.shtml.

Segal notes of Yahoel, “the figure is a personification of the name itself . . . it is quite clear that Yahoel is God’s vice-regent, second only to God himself.”[101] Later, in the second century, the terminology becomes even bolder, as the vice-regent Metatron-Yahoel receives the divine name in the form of the phrase יהוה הקטון (“the lesser Yahweh”).[102]

With respect to the context of this study, if divine plurality had been erased from Israelite religion shortly after the exile, how could belief in one God become “a keynote of the Jewish mission to Gentiles, as attested by its importance in Jewish propaganda literature and its recognition by pagan writers as a mark of Jews,”[103] while including a second god? How could Jews tolerate references to plural אלהים and assigned the divine name to another being all the while maintaining—at times on pain of death—that they were monotheists?[104] The same could be asked of Christians who worshipped Jesus as Yahweh incarnate alongside Yahweh, yet refused to embrace pagan Graeco-Roman polytheism under the same dire circumstances.[105]

In the last fifteen years a handful of scholars have taken note of the shortcomings of the consensus evolutionary paradigm for monotheism as it relates to Second Temple Jewish literature. Two competing lines of scholarly opinion have emerged in the effort to understand Second Temple Judaism’s accommodation of divine intermediaries.

The first line of thought, reflected by Hurtado’s earlier comments, argues that monotheism should be redefined to accommodate the data of first century C.E. Judaism. In this view, *cultic worship* of any being other

---

[101] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven,* 196.
[102] Ibid., 197. See 3 *En*. 7; 12:5, 48.
[103] Paul A. Rainbow, "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology," *NovT* 33 (1991): 81-82. For examples of Jewish propaganda literature, Rainbow cites, among many primary references, *Sib. Or.,* frg. 1; III, 11-12; IV, 27-32; V, 172-176, 284-285, 493-500; *Pseudo-Arist.* 132-143. He also cites Emil Schurer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, vol. III.1 (eds. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black; rev. English ed.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973-1986), 150-164. Among the non-Jewish writers and their works cited by Rainbow are Tacitus, *Hist.*, V.5; Juvenal, *Satire* XIV.96-106. See also John Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Paganism and Christian Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 67-88 (esp. 84).
[104] For example, the decrees of Antiochus Epiphanes (ca. 167 B.C.E.) put Jews under such duress. See Elias J. Bickerman, *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt* (trans. H.R. Moehring; SJLA 32; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979).
[105] Larry Hurtado, "The Binitarian Shape of Early Christian Worship," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 187-213; idem, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 21-22. See also in this regard Larry Hurtado, *One Lord, One God: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); P.M. Casey, "Monotheism, Worship, and Christological Development in the Pauline Churches," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 214-243 (esp. 214-218); and Adele Yarbro Collins, "The Worship of Jesus and the Imperial Cult," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 234-257 (esp. 234-236).

than Yahweh was forbidden in accord with Deut 6:4-6. Later expressions of the same rhetoric have received considerable scholarly attention in studies by Samuel Cohon,[106] Ralph Marcus,[107] Henry J. Wicks,[108] L. Stuckenbruck,[109] and Paul Rainbow.[110] These scholars have conclusively shown that "it is in the area of worship that we find 'the decisive criterion' by which Jews maintained the uniqueness of God over against both idols and God's own deputies."[111]

As noted in the earlier discussion with respect to attempts to redefine monotheism by scholars of the Hebrew Bible, the result of all the scholarly emphasis on the restriction of worship to one divine being is still monolatry, not monotheism. While one could argue that such monolatry—if understood as a species-unique mono-Yahwism—is in fact monotheism *on ancient terms*, this does not nullify the affirmation that other deity-level beings exist.

The second line of thought essentially recognizes that monolatry is the only workable categorization for those strains of Second Temple Judaism whose faith included a divine vice-regent. Proponents of this view argue that the abundance of evidence drawn from Jewish religious texts for what has variously been termed "binitarianism," the "bifurcation of God," "ditheism," and "angelic divine agency" simply disqualifies Judaism at this time from the modern understanding of monotheism. Either Judaism's concept of the one God must have been in a state of flux that allowed for an ambiguous relationship between God and other celestial beings, or the religion of Israel was not exclusively monotheistic until the second or third centuries C.E.

With such evidence in mind, P. Hayman concluded, "it is hardly ever appropriate to use the term monotheism to describe the Jewish idea of God," remarking, that "hardly any variety of Judaism seems to have been able to manage just one divine entity."[112] He adds:

---

[106] Samuel S. Cohon, "The Unity of God: A Study in Hellenistic and Rabbinic Theology," *HUCA* 26 (1955): 425-479. Cohon's article deals with Jewish self-identification and identification by others in monotheistic terms.
[107] Ralph Marcus, "Divine Names and Attributes in Hellenistic Jewish Literature," in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research, 1931-32* (New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1933), 43-120. Marcus' work is a compilation of theological vocabulary to discern to what degree (if any) Jews adopted the religious and philosophical language of Greeks about the nature of God.
[108] Henry J. Wicks, *The Doctrine of God in the Jewish Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Literature* (London: Hunter & Longhurst, 1915). This is a survey of the apocryphal and apocalyptic literature of the Second Temple period documenting the firm monotheistic beliefs of the Jews in this literature.
[109] Loren Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1995).
[110] Rainbow, "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix," 78-91.
[111] Hurtado, "First-Century Jewish Monotheism," 22.
[112] Hayman, "Monotheism," 2, 11.

> Monotheism . . . is indeed a misused word in Jewish Studies. The pattern of Jewish beliefs about God remains monarchistic throughout. God is king of a heavenly court consisting of many other powerful beings, not always under his control. For most Jews, God is the sole object of worship, but he is not the only divine being. In particular, there is always a prominent number two in the hierarchy to whom Israel in particular relates. This pattern is inherited from biblical times.[113]

M. Barker agrees with Hayman's contention that Judaism may not properly be called monotheistic until late antiquity. She charges that the "true religion of Israel, i.e., the pre-exilic religion of Jerusalem, was preserved only by those who wrote 1 Enoch and related works."[114] This religion, according to Barker, was by its very nature polytheistic, since there were "several Sons of God, one of whom was Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel."[115] The differentiation between El and Yahweh is preserved in a number of ways, chief among them the fact that "there are those [in the Hebrew Bible] called sons of El Elyon, El or Elohim, all clearly heavenly beings, and there are those called sons of Yahweh or the Holy One who are human."[116] According to Barker, the El and Yahweh fusion in Israelite religion articulated by the Dtr was unsuccessful. El and Yahweh remained Father and Son, and the former was always the high God of Israel while the latter became the patron *angel* of Israel when the earth was divided among the sons of Elyon in Deut 32:8-9 (Septuagint).[117]

Hayman's comments identify the divine council as related to the presence of exalted divine beings in Second Temple Jewish texts. His observation of the vice-regency paradigm drawn from the Hebrew Bible is especially astute. In the judgment of this writer, Barker overstates the data in some cases. The separation of El and Yahweh on polytheistic or henotheistic terms is problematic, as recent studies have demonstrated.[118] Barker fails to observe that Hos 1:10 mars the tight distinction she draws with respect to the vocabulary of divine sonship ("Yet the number of the children of Israel will be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, 'You are not my people,'

---

[113] Ibid., 15.
[114] Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Publishers, 1992), 14.
[115] Barker, *The Great Angel*, 3.
[116] Ibid., 4.
[117] Ibid., 6,10. See also Hayman, "Monotheism," p. 6. Herafter, Septuagint is abbreviated as LXX.
[118] See Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 45-48; Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic,* 60-75; J. C. de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium XCI; Leuven: University Press / Uitgeverij Peeters, 1990), 223-260 (esp. 237-239); M. Dijkstra, "Yahweh-El or El-Yahweh?" in *"Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin . . ." Collected Communications to the XIVth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Paris 1992* (BEATAJ 28; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 43-44; Stefan Paas, *Creation and Judgement: Creation Texts in Some Eighth Century Prophets* (*OtSt* 47; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003), 134-143. The view that El and Yahweh were either two "unrelated" deities or "Father and Son" is dealt with at

there it shall be said unto them, 'You are the sons of the living God' [בְּנֵי אֵל־חָי]"). The point of the observation is that in this passage, the "sons of El" are clearly human and not divine, thereby overturning the tidy distinction for which Barker argues. It is also marred by references to Israel as the son of God (Exod 4:22; Hos 11:1). These passages and others link the language of divine sonship (בני אלהים) and human sonship in a general "democratized" sense that extends beyond royal messianic divine sonship. In so doing, the divine family of the divine council is made to include human beings—a theme that is quite familiar from Qumran and the New Testament.[119] Consequently, the "adoption" of humans into the council does not mean the council and its members are downgraded. In fact, the relationship in Hosea and later in the Second Temple and New Testament periods relies on the retention of a worldview that embraced the divine council in its pre-exilic articulation.[120]

1.4 *Comments on Metaphor and Divine Imagery*

As noted earlier, the goal of this dissertation is to demonstrate that belief in a divine council that included other gods continued in Israelite religion after the exile. A potential objection readers may have to this position is that later canonical literature may reference other gods in purely metaphorical terms. Some brief comments on this objection is appropriate at this point.

In his recent work on metaphor, semantics, and divine imagery, D. Aaron asks an important question: "When we read a biblical passage that in some way involves the deity, *how do we know* whether its language was meant literally or figuratively?"[121] This question does not concern itself with whether the language utilized

---

length in Chapter Three. The point of the discussion there is not whether El and Yahweh were intellectually separated at *some* point in Israel's religion, but whether such a separation is evidenced by Deut 32:8-9 and Psalm 82.

[119] See Devorah Dimant, "Men as Angels: The Self-Image of the Qumran Community," in *Religion and Politics in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Adele Berlin; Bethesda, MD: University Press of America, 1996), 95; Carol Newsom, "He Has Established for Himself Priests: Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath *Shirot*," in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The New York University Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin* (ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman; JSPSup 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 101-120; Harold Riesenfeld, "Sons of God and Ecclesia: An Intertestamental Analysis," 89-104; B. Byrne, *"Sons of God"—"Seed of Abraham"*; James Tabor, "Firstborn of Many Brothers: A Pauline Notion of Apotheosis," 295-303.

[120] The rule of the council is also extended to the "one like a human being" (the Son of Man) in Dan 7:9-13, an important passage at Qumran and in Second Temple literature. As God's vice-regent, this Son of Man *shares* his status with the people of Israel (Dan 7:22ff.). Israel is therefore not to be equated with the Son of Man, but her status as divine son means shared authority with the council and its vice-regent. See Chapter Six on Daniel 7 and these issues.

[121] David H. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics, and Divine Imagery* (Brill Reference Library of Ancient Judaism 4; Leiden: E. J. Brill), 1.

conveys *to us* that the deity or deities described actually exist. The historian of religion is rather concerned to "establish the meaning intended by the author," since "what matters is what the speaker believes."[122]

During his brief survey and critiques of the work of other linguists for their views on how metaphor "works," Aaron embarks on his goal of "cast[ing] doubt on the well-entrenched but unscrutinized methodologies that currently dominate biblical scholarship regarding metaphor."[123] Along the way he makes several significant observations about developing his "language-based interpretive strategy" for answering the question above.[124] First, he notes that "a successful theory of meaning should not be limited to language alone; rather it should be able to account for meaning in semiotic structures other than those exclusively linguistic, such as ritual acts [or] iconography . . . ascriptive statements will be part of a broader cultural knowledge of how the world works."[125] Second, he rejects the common assumption that the absence of mythopoeic, poetic forms means that the literary-structual elements of a given passage convey only *demythologized* content. In short, he argues that there is more than one way to express myth. Third, he asks on what basis—other than some presumption of intellectual superiority—biblical scholars have determined that imagery of pagan literary origin is to be taken literally, whereas imagery in Israelite religious texts can be understood figuratively.

This study raises each of these issues in different ways, and so Aaron's proposals for handling divine descriptions are most welcome. Aaron proposes two criteria for determining when a statement is *not* metaphorical: (1) when "real actions, not figurative ones, are required by God as established by the context;" and (2) when "there is no incongruity or anomaly implied by predicational statements."[126] By way of example, Aaron understands literally such statements as "God is sun," "Yahweh is a warrior," and "Yahweh is a shield," meaning that, in the mind of the writer, Yahweh rules the skies and literally fought for and protected Israel from her enemies. Such appositional statements, however, "do not convey ontological identity via reductionism [so that] ontological identity is *not* the only alternative we have to metaphorical meaning."[127]

---

[122] Ibid., 7, 11. The emphasis is the author's. It should be noted tha Aaron is quite familiar with the literature related to the philosophy of language and the ongoing debate about authorial intention. The purpose here is not to rehearse his discussion of those issues, but to get to what he suggests for understanding metaphor and divine imagery.
[123] Ibid., 9.
[124] Ibid., 3, 44-46, 56-57.
[125] Ibid., 3, 61.
[126] Ibid., 59. The emphasis is the author's.
[127] Ibid. The emphasis is the author's.

These remarks are useful for encouraging readers who might argue that the late canonical and Second Temple period material examined in this study only refers to other gods in metaphorical terms to consider the alternative. As this study will demonstrate, there are many texts, canonical and otherwise, that speak of other gods and a second divine vice-regent in heaven which may be submitted to Aaron's criteria for determining when a statement is *not* metaphorical. But those criteria, it must be recalled, were proposed in the context of his goal to "establish the meaning intended by the author" and his assertion that "ascriptive statements will be part of a broader cultural knowledge." In other words, one's judgment as to whether certain texts convey real divine actions, not figurative ones and evince no incongruity or anomaly must be made from the viewpoint of the *writer* and *his* "broad cultural knowledge of how the world works."

Most biblical scholars consider deutero-Isaiah the most clearly monotheistic voice in Israel's canon. As this study will detail, there are cogent reasons to consider that his monotheistic commitment may be overstated. Aside from the ambiguity of Deutero-Isaiah's presumed denials of the existence of other gods,[128] the issue of how to understand some of his statements can be illustrated in Isa 40:26:

> שְׂאוּ־מָרוֹם עֵינֵיכֶם וּרְאוּ מִי־בָרָא אֵלֶּה הַמּוֹצִיא בְמִסְפָּר צְבָאָם
> לְכֻלָּם בְּשֵׁם יִקְרָא מֵרֹב אוֹנִים וְאַמִּיץ כֹּחַ אִישׁ לֹא נֶעְדָּר׃ס
>
> Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who has created these [objects / stars], who leads their host by number, who commands all of them by name by his tremendous power and mighty strength; not one is missing.

The question is whether Deutero-Isaiah speaks here of the stars of heaven, the heavenly host, as a "well-arrayed army" of divine beings led by Yahweh or something else.[129] As already noted in this chapter, the belief that the stars were gods in pre-exilic Israelite religion is well established.[130] The question is important and relevant, for the same terminology is used by the Deuteronomic writer in Deut 4:19-20, which, when compared to the nearly identical text of Deut 32:8-9, clearly informs the reader that the starry host of heaven were thought of as deities created and commanded by Yahweh. As we will see in Chapter Four, many scholars have no

---

[128] Chapter Four deals with the alleged denials of the existence of other gods in Deutero-Isaiah.
[129] F. Lelli, "Stars," *DDD,* 809.
[130] I. Zatelli, "Astrology and the Worship of the Stars in the Bible," 86-99; H. Niehr, "Host of Heaven," *DDD,* 429; F. Lelli, "Stars," *DDD,* 809-815.

trouble affirming this for Deuteronomy, but are quite averse to it in Deutero-Isaiah since the latter is considered to deny the existence of other gods.

I see two possible answers to the question offered above: (1) In concert with the rest of the contemporary ancient Near East, Deutero-Isaiah believed the stars were animate deities (albeit in his case, they were firmly under Yahweh's control), or (2) Deutero-Isaiah comprehended that the apparent movement of the constellations was an entirely natural phenomenon related to the earth's rotation, and so his reference to Yahweh's "leading" the host of heaven referred to the physical laws of the earth's motion created by Yahweh.[131] With respect to Aaron's work on metaphor, we must ask which of these options in the mind of writer convey real divine actions, not figurative ones taken in context with the writer's "broad cultural knowledge of how the world works."

It would be absurd to suggest that, in his pre-scientific world, Deutero-Isaiah could have grasped the physical laws governing the earth's movement on its axis. However, it is perhaps possible—though in my judgment very unlikely—that Deutero-Isaiah did see the movement or "activity" of the stars as *entirely* natural without understanding that process. Deutero-Isaiah could have had knowledge of the constellations and their movement. Assuming he wrote at the same time or after the literary production of the writers of Job, Chronicles, Amos, and Psalm 8, one could appeal to 1Chr 12:33, Job 9:9, and Amos 5:8 as evidence of this knowledge. However, the ability to make such observations does not rule out that the ancients (and thus Deutero-Isaiah) *simultaneously* believed the stars to be divine, an idea held as late as rabbinical and early Christian astrology.[132] For the sake of consistency, then, one can only argue that Deutero-Isaiah is writing exclusively in metaphor in Isa 40:22-26 by insisting (and proving) that he rejected the dominant worldview of his day, that the stars were divine beings.

It is far more likely that Deutero-Isaiah believed the stars to be animate. Other late exilic or post-exilic writers contemporary with Deutero-Isaiah wrote in such mythological terms. For example, in Psalm 148:1-5 we read:

---

[131] The movement of the constellations in this regular manner is associated with precession, a phenomenon involving the change in orientation of the pole star, and that most scholars contend was not understood by the ancients until the Greek scientist Hipparchus (ca. 130 B.C.E.). The movement of constellations was of course known much earlier; it is only the meaning of precession that is in dispute. See Tamsyn Barton, *Ancient Astrology* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 5-65.

1 הַלְלוּ יָהּ הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הַלְלוּהוּ בַּמְּרוֹמִים׃ 2 הַלְלוּהוּ כָל־מַלְאָכָיו
הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־צְבָאָיו׃ 3 הַלְלוּהוּ שֶׁמֶשׁ וְיָרֵחַ הַלְלוּהוּ כָּל־כּוֹכְבֵי אוֹר׃
4 הַלְלוּהוּ שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמָיִם וְהַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר מֵעַל הַשָּׁמָיִם׃ 5 יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה
כִּי הוּא צִוָּה וְנִבְרָאוּ׃

1 Praise Yah! Praise Yahweh from the heavens! Praise him in the heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels! Praise him, all his hosts! 3 Praise him, sun and moon! Praise him, all stars of light! 4 Praise him, O heavens of heavens and waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the Yahweh, for he commanded, and they were created.

Ps 148:1-5 either links the elements of the heavenly hosts (sun, moon, stars) with angels, or the terms are separate classes of beings who praise Yahweh from the heights of the heavens. The latter is more likely, since angels would not be referred to as sun and moon, though it was common to identify these bodies as gods.[133] The reference to the "waters above the heavens" is also important, for it points to the pre-scientific *mythological* worldview that there were waters above a solid vault of the earth, atop which Yahweh's throne was placed.[134] Other texts in Job (22:12; 26:10; 28:24; 37:18; 38:7-8) utilize vocabulary that points to a mythological understanding of the stars and "domed vault." Deutero-Isaiah himself uses the kind of mythological vocabulary found in Job and Psalms in the very same chapter as the host of heaven reference: הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־חוּג הָאָרֶץ (Isa 40:22; "It is he [Yahweh] who sits enthroned upon the circle of the earth").[135]

It is difficult to see how Deutero-Isaiah was rejecting the worldview that saw the stars as divine beings—the worldview of Deut 4:19-20; 32:8-9 (cf. Deut 17:3; 29:25). In light of the pre-scientific context of his statements and the mythologically-charged vocabulary, it is also hard to judge the claim that Deutero-Isaiah's words are purely metaphorical as anything but a "literary emendation, [the] claim that a narrative, idiom, or literary figure has been demythologized . . . when scholars, troubled by the mythological implications of the words at the literal level, opt for a less mythological rendering that conforms better to their view of Israelite belief."[136] There is no archaeological evidence for archaeoastronomy in Israel, nor are there Israelite

---

132 Barton, *Ancient* Astrology, 68-74.
133 The parallelism of Job 38:7-8 makes it clear that the stars are the "sons of God" (בני־האלהים). This study distinguishes these beings from angels (מלאכים) in the divine council.
134 H. G. May, "Some Cosmic Connotations of *Mayim Rabbim*, Many Waters," *JBL* 74 (1955): 9-21; Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 42-43, 126.
135 Norman C. Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," *CBQ* 34:4 (1972): 421. Habel notes that "The verb *yšb* , when applied to Yahweh, frequently means enthronement."
136 Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities*, 44.

astronomical texts like those from Mesopotamia demonstrating any astronomical practices in Israel. As Chapter Four details, however, the divine council does appear in Deutero-Isaiah.

1.5 *Overview of Ensuing Chapters*

This dissertation posits that indications of divine plurality in late canonical and non-canonical Second Temple period texts are better explained by hypothesizing the survival of Israel's pre-exilic divine council than by the consensus view of the development of monotheism. The investigation proceeds by summarizing the data for the divine council and its features in pre-exilic texts of the Hebrew Bible (Chapter 2), so as to indicate those data upon which ensuing chapters will focus. Chapter Three deals with assumptions and arguments related to two questions: (1) whether the Hebrew Bible underwent a systematic redaction to eliminate or obscure divine plurality in its pages and (2) whether the received text contains hints of a progression from polytheism to monotheism. The discussion focuses on how Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 82 are used to argue these positions and whether this argumentation is logically and exegetically coherent. Chapter Four concentrates attention on the divine council and the religious worldview of Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah. Chapter Five surveys exilic and post-exilic texts not covered in preceding chapters (namely Job, Psalms, and Zechariah) in search of evidence for divine plurality and divine council motifs. The book of Daniel is excluded from this chapter since the entirety of Chapter Six discusses the divine council in that book, moving the study into the heart of the Second Temple Period. Chapter Seven focuses on the sectarian literature of Qumran and its numerous references to divine plurality and the divine council. The final chapter, Chapter Eight, overviews the divine council in key LXX texts and Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic literature dated prior to the end of the first century C.E. The picture that emerges from this investigation is that the pre-exilic divine council not only survived into the Second Temple Period, but for many Jewish writers and leaders during and after the exile it was an integral component of their faith.

Chapter Two

The Divine Council of Pre-Exilic Israelite Religion as the Backdrop for Divine Plurality in Late Canonical and Non-Canonical Texts

Recent scholarly studies of the divine council document the linguistic and literary proof for the correlation between the divine assembly at Ugarit and in the Hebrew Bible. This is not to say that the council of Ugaritic religion and that of Israel are identical, only that there is a significant degree of congruence. A brief survey of these data is essential for providing the reader with the body of evidence that will guide the investigation through ensuing chapters to demonstrate the continuity of a council worldview from pre-exilic to later canonical and non-canonical texts. This chapter first sketches the conspicuous terminological evidence for a pantheon in both Ugaritic and Hebrew literature. The discussion then moves to a more detailed description of the bureaucratic structure of the respective councils, highlighting the role of the vice-regent in the Ugaritic council and Israelite adaptation of that structure in the context of its own monolatry. Brief comments are also interjected as to how the features of this divine bureaucracy challenge the consensus view that a pre-exilic council worldview was discontinued after the exile.

2.1 *Terminology for the Divine Council*

The literature of Ugarit has a number of designations for the divine assembly. The most common designations at Ugarit involve the root *pḫr*:[137]

pḫr ʾilm - "the assembly of El/ the gods"[138]
pḫr bn ʾilm - "the assembly of the sons of El/ the gods"[139]
pḫr mʿd - "the assembly of meeting"[140]
pḫr kkbm - "the assembly of the stars"[141]

As Smith notes, scholars are divided on whether the final -*m* in *ʾilm* is enclitic,[142] and thus whether the phrases in which it appears denote any assembly of the gods or only El's assembly.[143] El's assembly is certainly

---

[137] Mark S. Smith, *Origins,* 41; Mullen, *Divine Council*, 117-120.
[138] Gregorio Del Olmo Lete and Joaquín Sanmartín, "pḫr," *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* 2:669 (hereafter, *DULAT*). *KTU* 1.47:29, 1.118:28, 1.148:9.
[139] *DULAT* 2:669. *KTU* 1.4.III:14.
[140] *DULAT* 2:669. *KTU* 1.2.I:14, 15, 20, 31.

in view, however, when there is no final *-m*: *mpḫrt bn ʾil*-"the assembly of the gods."[144] Likewise, when *pḫr* appears with other deity names, the specific council becomes apparent: *pḫr bʿl*, "assembly of Baal."[145]

None of these examples have precise linguistic equivalents in the Hebrew Bible, though Isa 14:12 does refer to the הר מועד ("mount of assembly") as the meeting place of El and his assembly. Closer to Hebrew terminology are other Ugaritic phrases for council:

ʿdt ʾilm - "assembly of El / the gods"[146]
dr ʾil - "assembly (circle) of El"[147]
dr bn ʾil - "assembly (circle) of the sons of El"[148]
dr dt šmm - "assembly (circle) of those of heaven"[149]
dr ʾil wpḫr bʿl - "the assembly (circle) of El and the assembly of Baal"[150]

Linguistic parallels to these phrases have been found in the Hebrew Bible. Ps 82:1 makes reference to the עדת אל, translated variously as "divine assembly," "assembly of God," or "assembly of El." An unpointed Hebrew דרך may refer to the divine council in Amos 8:14. The word is typically pointed דֶּרֶךְ ("way"), but it may actually be Hebrew דּוֹר ("circle") with second person singular suffix ("your circle"; i.e., "your pantheon").[151] Conceptually equivalent to the Ugaritic notion of a divine assembly are the Hebrew terms סוד ("council") and קהל ("congregation"). For example, in Jer 23:18, 22 one reads "But which of them has stood in the council of the LORD (בסוד יהוה) . . ." and, "But if they had stood in my council (בסודי) . . ." Job 15:8

[141] *DULAT* 2:670. *KTU* 1.10.I:4; the phrase is parallel to *bn ʾil* in the same text. See also Job 38:7.
[142] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 41. See also Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 269.
[143] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 41.
[144] *DULAT* 2:566. See *KTU* 1.65:3; cf. 1.40:25, 42 along with *bn ʾil* in 1.40:33, 41 and its reconstruction in parallel lines in the same text - lines 7, 16, 24; 1.62:7; 1.123:15 (so noted by Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 42).
[145] *DULAT* 2:670. See *KTU* 1.39:7; 1.162:16; 1.87:18.
[146] *DULAT* 1:152. See *KTU* 1.15.II: 7, 11.
[147] *DULAT* 1:279-280. See *KTU* 1.15.III:19; 1.39:7; 1.162:16; 1.87:18.
[148] *DULAT* 1:279-280. See *KTU* 1.40:25, 33-34.
[149] *DULAT* 1:279-280. See *KTU* 1.10.I: 3, 5.
[150] *DULAT* 1:279-280. See *KTU* 1.39:7; 1.62:16; 1.87:18. See the ensuing discussion regarding the possibility that *Ṣapānu* may also refer to El's dwelling place. If that is the case, then Baal's council may actually have been El's council, with Baal ruling the council as "king of the gods" under El.
[151] F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: 1907), 189b. The suggested repointing makes sense in the context of Amos 8:14. Compare the odd "They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, 'Your god, O Dan, lives,' and, 'The manner (דֶּרֶךְ) of Beersheba lives'; even they shall fall, and never rise up again" to the parallelism in "They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, 'Your god, O Dan, lives,' and, 'The pantheon (דֹּרְךָ) of Beersheba lives'; even they shall fall, and never rise up again."

refers to the "council of God" (סוד אלוה, and Ps 89:8 references the "council of the holy ones" (סוד קדשים). The same psalm (89:6) also contains the phrase "assembly of the holy ones" (קהל קדושים).

2.2 *The Meeting Place of the Divine Council*[152]

In broad terms of ancient Near Eastern mythology, the divine council was considered to meet on a "cosmic mountain," that place where the gods lived, where heaven and earth intersected, divine decrees were given, kingship was exercised, and from which the cosmic waters of fertility flowed.[153] At some point in the development of ancient near eastern religions, including those of the west Semitic variety, the temple also became a cosmic center.[154]

In Ugaritic mythology, El and his council met to govern the cosmos at the "source of the two rivers," (*mbk nhrm*) in the "midst of the fountains of the double-deep" (*qrb ʾapq thmtm*), located on the cosmic mountain, *ḫuršanu*, associated with both physical and mythical peaks to the north of Ugarit.[155] Another Ugaritic text replaces *ʾapq* with *ʿdt* in the parallel phrases *mbk nhrm* || *bʿdt thmt* ("El at the sources of the two rivers, at the meeting place of the double-deep"), thereby confirming that El's abode was a "meeting place."[156] El's mountainous meeting place was also designated *pḫr mʿd*, the place of the "assembled congregation."[157]

Baal's divine mountain, Mount *Ṣapānu*, a proper noun of uncertain etymology,[158] was also a focal point of Ugaritic cosmic geography, as indicated by the characterization of a list of deities as "the gods of *Ṣapānu* (*ʾil ṣpn*) and a reference to the cultic "feasts of *Ṣapānu*" (*dbh ṣpn*).[159] Baal's Mount *Ṣapānu* is also called a "pleasant place" (*nʿm*) which, as Smith notes, is "garden language that, in biblical texts, is a recurring motif for the center of the cosmos."[160] Interestingly, it appears as though El also either lived on Mount *Ṣapānu*[161] or on a

---

[152] The fullest treatments of this item occur in Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 128-74, and Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 34-176.
[153] Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 3-4.
[154] Ibid., 21.
[155] *DULAT* 1:91. See *KTU* 1.3.V:5-7; 1.6.I:32-34. See also Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 36; Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 370; Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 23-24, 37-38, 98-160.
[156] *DULAT* 1:151-152. See *KTU* 1.100:3. See also Claude F.A. Schaeffer, *Ugaritica V: Nouveaux texts accadiens, hourrites et ugaritiques* (Paris: Paul Guenther, 1968), 564.
[157] Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 269.
[158] The two major studies of the word's etymology are Cecelia Grave, "The Etymology of Northwest Semitic *ṣapānu*," *UF* 12 (1980): 221-229 and N. Wyatt, "The Significance of ṢPN in Western Thought," in *Ugarit: Ein östmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient: Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung* (ed. Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz; Ugarit und seine altorientalische Umwelt 1; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995), 213-237.
[159] *DULAT* 2:788; Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 29. See *KTU* 1.3:III.29; 1.47.I; 1.148.I; 1.91.1; 1.101:2.
[160] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 29.

mountain range of which *Ṣapānu* was part.[162] El's bestowal of the throne of kingship over the gods, "delegated in turn to Yamm, Baal, and Athtar,"[163] occurs in *KTU* 1-2, where a number of mountainous peaks at times appear interchangeable in view of the literary parallelism.[164] Given the variety of mountain peaks for this scene, the fact that Baal had his own council may be explained as his rulership of the entire divine council in his role as the one who "rules over the gods" under El's sovereign oversight. In view of Baal's role as vice-regent (see below), this understanding is quite possible. The plausibility of this perspective is strengthened by coupling it to the recent work on the patrimonial household patterns in the Baal Cycle with respect to both the human and divine family at Ugarit.[165]

In connection with convening on the cosmic mountain at the crossroads of heaven and earth, El and his council issued divine decrees from the "tents of El" (*ḏd ʾil*)[166] and the "tent (shrine)" (*qrš*) of El.[167] At least one text also presents the divine mountain (*ḫuršanu*) in parallel with the divine tent (*ḏd*). As Clifford notes in this regard, that El would be described as living in a tent is no surprise, for in the Keret Epic, the gods live in *ʾahlm* ("tents") and *mšknt* ("tabernacles").[168] Other important vocabulary for El's dwelling at Ugarit include *mṯb* ("dwelling") and *mẓll* ("shelter") and, outside the Baal Cycle, *bt* ("house") and *hklm* ("temple").[169] El is at times alone in these places, and the gods come to his abode to seek various decisions and permissions, while at other times he is pictured with his assembly.[170]

All of this descriptive terminology for the cosmic center is found in the Hebrew Bible with respect to Israel's God and his council. Yahweh's sanctuary is on a mountain, Mount Zion (Ps 48:1-2) which is located in

---

161 Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit,* 99, n. 128. Wyatt sees the activities in *KTU* 1.1.III:22-23, 1.2.III:4-5, and 1.4.IV:19-24 as taking place at El's abode (which is clear in those texts), but interprets the entourage sequence and Baal's "departing for the heights of Saphon" as referring to the same journey to El's abode.
162 Wyatt, "The Significance of ṢPN in Western Thought," 225-226.
163 Wyatt, *Myths of Power: A Study of Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugaritic and Biblical Tradition* (UBL 13; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), 34-44.
164 Wyatt, "The Significance of ṢPN in Western Thought," 213-226.
165 J. D. Schloen, "The Patrimonial Household in the Kingdom of Ugarit: A Weberian Analysis of Ancient Near Eastern Society" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1995), 399. See the discussion below on the divine family.
166 On the meaning of *ḏd* and the form as plural, see Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 51-53 and W. E. G. Watson, "Ugaritic Lexical Studies in Perspective," *SEL* 12 (1995): 221-222. See also *DULAT* 1:285.
167 *DULAT* 2:712. Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 48-53; see references in footnote 44. The word *ḏd* appears six times to designate El's dwelling (*KTU* 1.1.III:23; 1.2.III:5; 1.3.V:20-21; 1.4.IV:22-23; 1.6.I:34-35; 1.17.VI:48).
168 Ibid., 54.
169 Ibid., 53-54.
170 Ibid., 55.

the ירכתי צפון, the “heights of the north (*ṣaphôn*),"[171] or on a "very high mountain" (Ezek 40:2). Zion is the הר מועד ("mount of assembly"), again located in ירכתי צפון (Isa 14:13). Within the confines of the divine assembly's meeting place in Israelite religion, one finds that the council head sits on a throne that is connected to Zion.[172] The song of Moses (Exod 15:16-18) beseeches Yahweh to plant the people of Israel בהר נחלתך (“in the mount of your inheritance"), which is Yahweh’s מקדש (“sanctuary”). This seat of authority is at times depicted above a wide expanse (רקיע) in *merkabah* visions (Ezek 1:22-26).[173] This language is quite similar to the dwellings of both Mot and Kothar, which are each referred to as "the throne where he sits, the land of his heritage" (*ʾarṣ nḥlt*).[174]

A tradition preserved in Ezek 28:13-16 equates the "mountain of God" with Eden, the "garden of God." The cosmic garden is referred to in conceptual parallel in 28:2 to the seat of the gods (מושב אלהים) in the midst of the seas (בלב ימים), thereby linking the cosmic imagery used for the cosmic mountains of El and Baal at Ugarit to the Israelite council.[175] The description of Eden in Gen 2:6-15 references the "ground flow" (עד) that "watered the entire face of the earth." The four headstreams that derived from the ground flow and the river (נהר) flowing out of Eden have all been considered by scholars as parallel to the paradise language of the watery dwelling place of El.[176] Mount Zion is described as a watery habitation in Isa 33:20-22, and Ezek 47:1-12, Zech 14:8, and Joel 3:18 (Hebrew, 4:18) all describe the waters flowing from the temple of God in Jerusalem, Mount Zion, the divine mountain. All of these references are rooted in the tradition of a sacred mountain in the north, *Zaphon* of Syria."[177]

---

171 See Ps 48:1-2. Additionally, Shadday may mean "mountain dweller." See Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 581; Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 48-60.
172 See Isa 6:1; 8:18; Jer 3:17; 14:21; 17:12; Ps 9:12; Ezek 1:26.
173 Ezek 10:1-22; 11:22; cf. Ps 18:11. See also Clifford, "Tent of Meeting," 207.
174 Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 81, 90-91; cf. *KTU* 1.1.III:1-3; 1.5.II:13-16.
175 Ed Noort, "Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible," in *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity* (ed. Gerard P. Luttikhuizen; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 21-36 (esp. 27-28); K. Spronk, *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East,* (AOAT 219; Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1986), 213-227; idem, "Down with Hêlēl! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa 14:12," in *"Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf": Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient: Festschrift fur Oswald Loretz* (Münster, 1998), 717-726; Herbert G. May, "The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12-19," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), 168.
176 For the two rivers of El's mountain and the four waterways of Genesis 2, see Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain,* 99-102.
177 Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain,* 100, 102.

Just as the cosmic paradise of Eden is linked to Zion by the prophets, Mount Sinai, the "mountain of God" (e.g., Exod 3:1; 4:27), served as the cosmic center prior to the construction of the Tabernacle and the Temple. Sinai was the place where Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel saw God and feasted with him (Exodus 24). The description of this banquet includes the observation that under God's feet was a paved construction of "sapphire stone" (לבנת הספיר; likely lapis lazuli),[178] "like the heavens for clearness." In Baal's palace in *Ṣapānu*, there were also paved bricks (*lbnt*) that made Baal's house *bht ṭhrm ʾiqnʾum* ("a house of the clearness of lapis lazuli").[179] Most often Sinai is the place from which divine decrees are issued. Yahweh gave the law to Israel at Sinai in the presence of his heavenly host (Deut 33:1-2; Ps 68:15-17 [Hebrew 16-18]). Ugaritic El likewise dispensed his decrees (Ugaritic, *tḥm*) with his assembly present.

The imagery of the "domed tent" of El at Ugarit corresponds to Israelite descriptions of the Tent of Meeting (אהל מועד) and the Tabernacle (משכן).[180] Moses is told to construct the Tabernacle and its equipment according to the pattern shown to him by God on the holy mountain (Exod 26:30; cf. 25:9,40). The Tabernacle on earth is to be a copy of the heavenly tent in accord with the religious principle of "as in heaven, so on earth."[181] Israel's tent is the counterpart of the divine "houses" on the well-watered mountain dwelling of El and the meeting place of the divine council. As noted previously, in the Keret Epic, the gods and "the circle [pantheon] of El" lived in *ʾahlm* ("tents") and *mšknt* ("residences").[182] El issued his decrees from his tent,[183] as the tent of Israel was the place God dispensed oracles for his people (Exod 33:7-11; Num 11:16-30). In Israel, Yahweh came upon a "chariot of cloud" (עב הענן) at Sinai, and the Tent of Meeting and the Tabernacle were overshadowed by a cloud (ענן).[184] At Ugarit, *ʿnn* "was a messenger of the deity, a cloud in all likelihood."[185] In

[178] Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, and Jakob Stamm, *HALOT* II:764.
[179] Ibid., 112.
[180] Clifford, "Tent of Meeting," 221-27.
[181] Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 123. Clifford also notes that, "the similarity in form between the earthly dwelling of the god and its heavenly prototype brings about the presence of the deity" (p. 150).
[182] *DULAT* 1:32, 2:591.
[183] *KTU* 1.4.I: 20-44.
[184] Exod 19:9. For the translation, see Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 109ff. See Exod 19:16; 24:15ff.; 40:34-38; Num 9:15ff; 10:11; 12:5ff.; ; Deut 5:22; 31:15; 1 Kings 8; Isa 4:5.
[185] Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 112. See also *DULAT* 1:170. Interestingly, one of the chiefs of the archangels (the Watchers) in the Second Temple period book of 1 Enoch (*1 En.* 6:7; 69:2) was named עננאל (*ʿanan-el*; lit., "cloud of El/God"). See Chapter Eight.

addition, Israel's tabernacle had a court (חצר). Baal's house had a *ḥṣr* as well,[186] but Baal coveted the *bt* / *ḥẓr* ("temple / [divine] mansion") that other gods had.[187] The above tent motifs are also transferred to Mount Zion. Moreover, Zion is Yahweh's אהל in Isa 33:20 and other passages.[188]

The specific section of the tabernacle and temple in which the presence of Yahweh dwelled was called the "most holy place" (קֹדֶשׁ הקדושׁים) which was "under the wings of the cherubim" (אֶל־תַּחַת כַּנְפֵי הַכְּרוּבִים), a clear reference to throne room imagery.[189] The קֹדֶשׁ הקדושׁים phrase is infrequently replaced or paralleled with דביר, the "inner sanctuary."[190] According to Ps 76:3 and other texts, Yahweh's "pavilion" and "dwelling place" (סכו ומעונתו) are on Zion.[191] Given the context of the inner sanctum being situated at the center of Yahweh's tent (tabernacle), house (temple), and the associated cloud and mountain language, there is conceptual overlap between this most sacred location and the throne-room meeting place of Yahweh-El and his council, the סך / מעון / אהל מועד.

Finally, there are descriptions and terms for the cosmic center in the Hebrew Bible that are not shared with Ugarit. Genesis 28 describes the patriarch Jacob's vision of the מלאכי אלהים ascending and descending on the divine stairway (סלם) as the "house of God" and the "gate of heaven" (28:12-17). The association of this vision at Bethel with the activity of God and various members of his divine council is confirmed in Genesis 35. Bethel is described as another place where heaven and earth met, a place where the divine council held court. Not only did Jacob see Yahweh at the top of the stairway (28:13) and the messenger מלאכים going about their business (28:12), but Gen 35:7 tells us that the plural האלהים also appeared to him (the verb is plural; נִגְלוּ).[192]

---

[186] *KTU* 1.4.IV:51; 1.4.V: 63; 1.3:V:47.
[187] *DULAT* 1:245-250, 1:382. See Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 125.
[188] Pss 26:8; 74:7; 1 Chr 9:23.
[189] See Exod 26:33; Num 18:10; 1 Kgs 8:6.
[190] See 1 Kgs 8:6; I1 Chr 5:7; Ps 28:2.
[191] For the terminology and other references, see Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 151 and 1 Sam 2:29ff.; Pss 26:8; 26:15; 2 Chr 36:15; Deut 26:15; 2 Chr 30:27. סכו ("his abode") comes from the masculine סך.
[192] Compare Gen 35:9 (וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב עוֹד ; "And God appeared to Jacob again") to 35:7 (נִגְלוּ אֵלָיו הָאֱלֹהִים ; "the gods appeared to him").

While סלם ("stairway") has no specific linguistic equivalent at Ugarit, but if scholars are correct in identifying סלם as a ziggurat, then it is merely an artificial cosmic mountain.[193]

2.3 *The Members of the Divine Council*

With respect to the constituents of the Ugaritic divine assembly,[194] members are referred to as *ʾilm* ("gods" [of the pantheon]),[195] *bn ʾil* ("sons of El"), and *bn ʾilm* ("sons of the gods / El").[196] In the Keret Epic, El sits at the head of the assembly and addresses its members as either *ʾilm* ("gods") or *bny* ("my sons").[197] The interplay in terminology may suggest that El had his own council at Ugarit, composed of his own "sons," and this council was part of a still larger, more general council.[198] The divine assembly at Ugarit also included "messenger gods" (*mlʾkm*),[199] but contrary to the conclusions of scholars who have studied the divine council to this point, I do not consider the *mlʾkm* to be *members* of the divine council. The *mlʾkm* were present in council because they rendered service to the high god and the other gods who ranked above them,[200] but the ruling council was composed entirely of El and his spouse and offspring. In the textual references above to the Ugaritic council, when members are identified the language of kinship is always used. The gods were all fathered by El and were thus members of his divine family. A distinction between council membership (and its authority) and service to council members must be drawn for reasons that will become clear below.

As Mark S. Smith and L. Handy detail, the council members at Ugarit are arranged into a strictly ranked hierarchy. The highest rank of authority was occupied by the royal couple, El and Athirat. Handy comments: "They owned the heavens and the earth and so were entitled to appoint and establish various rulers of their

---

[193] Speiser understood סלם, a biblical *hapax legomenon*, as being derived from a Semitic stem *sll*, "to heap up" and suggested the Mesopotamian ziggurat as the referent (E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* [AB 1; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964], 218). Others have proposed that סלם should be connected (by metathesis) to Akkadian *simmiltu* ("stairway"), but the parallel is not without difficulty since in Mesopotamia deities did not use stairways for descent as in Genesis 28 (H. Hoffner, "Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew אוב," *JBL* 86 (1967): 397 [n. 30], 398. See also the cautious approaches of H. R. Cohen, *Biblical Hapax Legomena in the Light of Akkadian and Ugaritic* (SBLDS 37; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), 34, 108; and F. Greenspahn, *Hapax Legomenon in Biblical Hebrew* (SBLDS 74; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), 176.
[194] The fullest discussion of this topic is found in Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 175-208. See also Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 269-99.
[195] *DULAT* 1:48-51.
[196] *DULAT* 1:225-227. *KTU* 1.16.V:10-25; 1.40.R:25, 41-42; 1.65.R: 1-3; 1.162: 16-17; cf. Mullen, "Divine Assembly," 215.
[197] *KTU* 1.15.III:19; 1.16.V:10-25 (esp. 24-25). On this topic in general, see Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 183ff.
[198] Mark S. Smith, *Origins,* 43.
[199] *DULAT* 2:546.
[200] Ibid. See also Lowell K. Handy, "The Appearance of Pantheon in Judah," in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaisms*, ed. by Diana Vikander Edelman (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 35-36.

cosmic world."[201] At Ugarit, then, El was "the highest king of a series of kings over various aspects of the universe," while Asherah was a "Queen Mother" figure.[202]

The second tier at Ugarit was composed of the "royal children," the seventy sons of Athirat and El.[203] The divine offspring possessed derivative authority granted to them by the level of highest authority. Handy notes:

> They basically [had] free dominion in their rules, which allowed them to fight among themselves, argue with their superiors, abuse their power to thwart others (both divine and human) and even kill each other (not to mention humans). In all this, however, they remain answerable for their behavior and can be called up in judgment before El.[204]

To this second tier belonged the major figures of the pantheon: Anat, Athtart, Athtar, Baal, and Mot among others. In earlier studies of the Ugaritic material, Baal was considered to be an outsider to El's family due to his designation as the "son of *Dgn*."[205] Elsewhere Baal is clearly referred to as "son of El,"[206] and refers to El as "Bull El, my father."[207] The seventy sons of El and Athirat are also called Baal's brothers.[208]

That Baal was indeed a son of El is accepted by most scholars today. There have been three approaches to the problem of El and Dagan, particularly with a goal to resolving Baal's sonship. Based upon his work demonstrating that Ugaritic Dagan was a weather god, N. Wyatt proposes that the *nomen rectum* in the phrase *bn Dgn* be taken attributively and translated "son of rain" ("Rainy One").[209] This view casts aside any filial relationship between Baal and Dagan, so that Baal is the son of El only. More recently J.D. Schloen has proposed an explanation of *bn Dgn* that fits with his view that the Baal Cycle exhibits concerns of patrimonialism. Schloen reasons that *bn Dgn* reflects an awareness "of a longer family history" of the gods similar to that found in *The Phoenician History* of Philo of Byblos.[210] In that version of history of the Canaanite gods, both El (=Kronos) and Dagan (Dagon) were sons of Heaven (Ouranos) by the chief wife Earth (Gē). Baal was a younger son of Heaven (Ouranos) by a mistress, but only after El had overthrown Heaven. El "captured

---

[201] Handy, "Appearance of Pantheon," 33. Mark S. Smith and Handy disagree as to how much authority was actually shared by Athirat.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 45.
[204] Handy, "Appearance of Pantheon," 35.
[205] For example, see *KTU* 1.2.I:18-19, 35-37; 1.5.VI:24; 1.6.I:6-7.
[206] *KTU* 1.17.VI:28-29.
[207] *KTU* 1.3.V:35; 1.4.IV:47; 1.17.I:23.
[208] *KTU* 1.4.VI:44-46.
[209] N. Wyatt, "The Relationship of the Deities Dagan and Hadad," *UF* 12 (1980): 375-379.
[210] J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East* (Winona Lake,

Heaven's mistress and gave her in marriage to his brother Dagan, whereupon she gave birth to Baal," who was thus half brother to both El and Dagan, and also a stepson to Dagan.[211] As Schloen explains:

> **By the time of the events recounted in the Ugaritic Baal myth, El's brother Dagan had departed the scene and El was patriarch of an extended family that included his half-brother and nephew Baal, the adopted son of Dagan, as well as sons of his own—Yamm and Mot—who were Baal's cousins and nephews. . . . The advantage of this explanation of Baal's parentage as son of Dagan is that it accounts for the bitter rivalry between Baal and his agnatic relatives in the household of El. As a son of Heaven himself and younger brother of El, Baal could claim El's patrimony as his own rightful inheritance. On the other hand, as full sons of the patriarch El, Yamm and Mot could claim the same inheritance. . . . This may explain El's initial failure to defend what Baal regards as his rightful status."[212]**

In Schloen's view, then, Baal was son to El in the context of patriarchalism. While such a tradition cannot be discounted, the problem with this perspective is that at Ugarit Baal is not considered a brother of El, and Yamm and Mot are described as Baal's brothers, not cousins and nephews. The conflict between sons within a patriarchal household motif also does not depend on Baal's status as an outsider.

G. del Olmo Lete opts for a third answer, that El and Dagan are the same deity. This view is supported by the fact that *KTU* 1.118 and 1.47 have both El and Dagan sharing the same epithet, "father god" (*ʾilib*).[213] Additionally, inscriptions at what most scholars consider the temple of Dagan at Ugarit make an identification very likely,[214] the Mesopotamian pantheon identified both Dagan and El with the supreme god (Anu/Enlil),[215] and at Ebla Dagan is the high god, also called "lord of Canaan."[216] Combining Wyatt's reasonable conclusion that Dagan was a weather god with the shared epithet and this comparative material persuades this writer that, in the words of del Olmo Lete, "there can be no doubt that the equation of *Ilu* and *Daganu* expresses the process of cultural and cultic identification of two

---

IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 354.
211 Ibid, 354.
212 Ibid.
213 G. del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit* (trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson; Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1999), 74. See *DULAT* 1:52.
214 Ibid., 74, note 78. See also J. Fontenrose, "Dagon and El," *Oriens* 10 (1957): 277-279.
215 del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion,* 74, n. 78.
216 G. Pettinato, *The Archives of Ebla* (New York: Doubleday, 1981), 245ff.

(Canaanite / Amorite) pantheons."[217] This fusion explains the dual reference to Baal's parentage alongside the clear descriptions of his kinship with the other sons of El.

The tier under the *bn ʾilm* was presumably occupied by "craft deities" who were portrayed as "specialists whose expertise was appreciated by those above them, but who had to take orders."[218] These deities are allowed to talk back to their superiors, argue with them and even make fun of them, but are (according to Handy) not allowed to disobey.[219]

Evidence for this third tier at Ugarit is weak. There is little reason to accept its presence in the council structure. The most telling argument against this tier is that its members have freedom to act and argue with the other gods, and are thus not mere servants of the council. Handy believes that the submission shown by these deities must place them below the first two tiers, but this criterion makes little sense since *all* deities below El were expected to obey him. Even Baal had to seek El's approval for important decisions. Moreover, as Smith notes elsewhere, one of these craftsmen deities may actually be regarded as royalty due to -*mlk* occurring in his name (*kṯrmlk*), making that deity a member of the second tier. Smith objects to this deity having second-tier status since he was an outsider—a foreigner—whose homes were in Egypt and Crete. However, if the El-Dagan correspondence reflects a merger between Canaanite and Amorite religion, the inclusion of an outside deity is not sufficient for eliminating a deity from the second tier. In point of fact, as indicated below, the possession of authority over a geographic region also marks a deity of the second tier. Lastly, given the absence of a "craftsman" tier in the Hebrew pantheon, when its general structure is otherwise so similar to that of Ugarit, there seems little reason to argue for this structural element of the council.

At the bottom of the pantheon's hierarchy were "the slaves of the divine realm, the messengers," the *mlʾkm,* who "were not allowed any personal volition, [but] simply took orders, delivered messages, and behaved themselves."[220] This lack of volition, which extended to never arguing with those deities above them or questioning authority, truly separates this tier from the others, and will be important for comparative purposes

[217] del Olmo Lete, *Canaanite Religion,* 74.
[218] Handy, "Appearance of Pantheon," 35. Mark S. Smith recognizes this tier, but admits it is poorly attested in Ugaritic texts. See my subsequent comments on the tenuous nature of his third tier.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid., 36.

with the Hebrew Bible. Despite their lowly status, these beings are still called *ʾilm* in the Ugaritic literature.[221] Smith speculates that this designation is used at Ugarit because the vocabulary for divinity can be used generally to mark off a being that is not the same as a human.[222] As noted below, there is likely a more coherent reason behind the designation than "general divinity."

The Hebrew Bible evinces the same ranked hierarchy, with nuanced differences. At the top of the pantheon was Yahweh or, depending on one's view of the relationship of epigraphic evidence from Kuntillet ʿAjrud and Khirbet el-Qom, the divine couple, Yahweh and his consort Asherah.[223] What is clear is that Yahweh (alone) is specifically described in several passages of the Hebrew Bible as presiding over a council of divine beings.[224]

The second tier is marked in the Hebrew Bible by the identification of the members of the divine council as divine family members or "sons of God," the בני האלהים and בני אלים.[225] The בני האלהים of the divine assembly are also respectively called אלהים and בני עליון in Ps 82:1,6. The Hebrew Bible refers to these same beings as "stars" in Job 38:7 (כוכבי בקר in parallel to בני אלהים) and Isa 14:13 (כוכבי אל).[226] Although these phrases can be used of celestial bodies, the context of these references points to divine beings, not astronomical phenomena. As Oldenburg points out, El is never identified with a heavenly body.[227] Scholars have therefore argued persuasively that these phrases in both languages point to divine beings. Consequently, the phrase "stars of El" in Isa 14:13 points to created beings with divine status rather than self-existent beings who are divine in nature. The Hebrew Bible at times names the other אלהים who are part of Yahweh's retinue, notably Resheph (Deut 32:23-24; Hab 3:5) and Deber (Hab 3:5).[228]

---

[221] *KTU* 1.3.III:32. See K. M. Alomia, "Lesser Gods of the Ancient Near East and Some Comparisons with Heavenly Beings of the Old Testament" (Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 1987), 237.
[222] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 6, 97ff.
[223] The controversy relates to inscriptions from these locations that mention "Yahweh and his Asherah." There are other translation possibilities for the phrase, but among those who accept "his Asherah" the question that requires an answer is whether or not a belief in Asherah as Yahweh's consort was localized or part of the official worship at the Jerusalem Temple. This debate in turn involves the interpretation of the asherah symbol in 2 Kgs 17:16. See Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 47, 72-74; idem, *Early History of God*, 80-96.
[224] Pss 82, 89; Jer 23:18,22; Job 15:8; 1 Kings 22. See the discussion in Chapter Three for the controversy over Psalm 82 and the relationship of the names Yahweh and El.
[225] Pss 29:1; 89:6 (Heb. 89:7); Gen 6:2,4; Job 1:6; 2:1. See Simon B. Parker, "Sons of (the) God(s)," *DDD,* 794-800.
[226] Ibid., 794-795.
[227] Ulf Oldenburg, "Above the Stars of El: El in Ancient South Arabic Religion," *ZAW* 82 (1970): 187-208 (cf. 197).
[228] Mark S. Smith, *Early History of God*, 47, 67-68, 149.

The designation "stars" and its conceptual overlap with astral bodies very likely explains why certain council members in the Hebrew Bible can also be described with terms of luminosity. Isa 14:12-15 refers to a divine being הילל בן שחר ("Shining One, son of Dawn"), possibly a biblical adaptation of the Athtar mythology.[229] Isa 14:12-15 is considered conceptually parallel to Ezek 28:1-19, where a description of Eden as a well-watered garden and cosmic mountain evidence the divine council setting.

The third tier of Handy and Smith, the craftsmen tier, is purely speculative. Handy postulates that the "god of snake-bite-cure," called Neḥushtan by Hezekiah, is evidence for a third-tier deity revered in the pantheon of Judah.[230] Handy argues that the similarity of this "healing deity" with the Ugaritic third-tier deity Shatiqatu justifies this conclusion, but the argument lacks force due to the tenuous nature of this tier at Ugarit.[231]

In concert with Ugaritic literature, the occupants of the lowest level of the divine assembly in the Hebrew Bible are the מלאכים, the "angels" of the English Bible. Specialists in Israelite religion who have focused on the divine council are apparently in agreement that, unlike the Ugaritic texts, at no point are the biblical מלאכים ever specifically designated אלהים, אלים, or the בני האלהים in the Hebrew text.[232] Thus in the consensus view, מלאכים of the Israelite council are not only a separate class and at the lowest level of the heavenly bureaucracy, but they are not regarded as ontologically equivalent to the אלהים, אלים, or the בני האלהים.

While there is no conclusive evidence to overturn this viewpoint, it is important to point out that the above distinctions may be incorrect. The מלאכי אלהים ("angels/messengers of God") in Jacob's dream of Genesis 28 have already been brought into the discussion. It was noted that not only did Jacob see Yahweh at the top of the stairway (28:13) and the מלאכים going about their business (28:12), but Gen 35:7 tells us that

[229] Michael S. Heiser, "The Mythological Provenance of Isa 14:12-15: A Reconsideration of the Ugaritic Material," *VT* 51:3 (2001): 354-369.
[230] Lowell K. Handy, "Hezekiah's Unlikely Reform," *ZAW* 100 (1998): 114-115.
[231] The same could be said of Second Temple period material, where Raphael (cf. Hebrew רפא) is described as the healer of God in *Tob* 12:11-22. The fact that there is a divine being with this function does not prove a "craftsman" tier in the council.
[232] Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven*, 158-59; idem, "Dissenting Deities or Obedient Angels," *Biblical Research* 35 (1990): 18-35; Mark S. Smith, *Origins,* 46-48, 55-56; Simon B. Parker, "Sons (of the) God(s)," *DDD,* 794-800. Mullen's earlier study does not directly address the question in its discussion of council members (*Divine Council*, 175-209). I have not found any scholar who attempts to

the plural האלהים also appeared to Jacob in this theophanic vision (האלהים is the subject of נִגְלוּ in 35:7). The possibility therefore exists that the מלאכי אלהים are האלהים. This would mean that, just as at Ugarit, the מלאכים were regarded as deities; that is, מלאכים is a purely functional term. The מלאכים would then be האלהים on errands for Yahweh, and there would only be two tiers in the Israelite council—Yahweh and the gods.[233] This would be an interesting Israelite adaptation of the Canaanite council, given that all the gods would be viewed as inferior and subservient to Yahweh, but this is not monotheism as we have seen. This understanding also might assist in articulating the deity status of the מלאך יהוה, considered by many scholars and Second Temple period rabbis as the human manifestation of Yahweh or the Name.[234] Against the "two tier" understanding, it could be argued that all three levels of the Israelite council were present in Jacob's dream. This view also suffers from later Jewish understanding of an angelic class of divine being,[235] and the patrimonial aspects of the divine council noted by Schloen.

The strict separation of מלאכים from אלהים, (בני) אלים is of great importance to some scholars. As Chapter Three of this study details, Smith, Parker, and Handy argue forcefully from this position that, after the exile, the middle tiers of the council—the tier of the other gods—disappeared or were absorbed by the lower tier, thereby leaving only God and the angels. This alteration of the pre-exilic council was due to the advent of exclusive monotheism. But if מלאכים are actually אלהים / (בני) אלים sent on errands, and מלאכים are not a distinct class in the Israelite version of the council, then the idea of a loss of the middle council tiers leaving only God and his "angels" (מלאכים) carries no weight whatsoever in either defending monotheism or denying

---

identify the מלאכים as the plural אלוהים / (בני) אלים in Israelite religion. It is likely that the overarching acceptance of the consensus paradigm of monotheism prohibits such an approach for reasons discussed in this section of the study.

233 The only other conceivable equation of the terms is the interchange in Dan 3:25-28, where Nebuchadnezzar sees a fourth personage in the fiery furnace whose appearance he describes "as a son of the gods" in 3:25 (לבר־אלהין) and an angel in 3:28 (מלאך). Scholars agree that, since these words are placed in the mouth of a foreigner, these descriptions cannot necessarily be taken as an articulation of Jewish religion.

234 See Fishbane, "Some Forms of Divine Appearance," 261-270; Charlesworth, "The Hypostatic Voice," 19-41; Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, 76-87, 106-111, 192-203 (cf. 204-211 for later rabbinic evidence for this view).

235 For example, the term "archangel" refers to a ruling angel. An archangel could be conceived as a member of the same heavenly class who is granted authority over other constituent members, or a separate class superior to angels. Regardless of which explanation is correct, the term and associated designations appear along with "gods" or "sons of God" in Second Temple texts.

the survival of the pre-exilic council. There would be no such class as angels; only God and the subservient gods are in the council, before *and after* the exile.

2.4 *The Structure and Operation of the Divine Council's Bureaucracy*

This study accepts the view that מלאכים are to be distinguished from אלהים, אלים (בני), but denies an erasure of the middle tier of gods. The overall structure and operation of the Israelite divine council become clearer once the second tier of the council of Ugarit and the vice-regency of Baal are adequately understood. Clarity in these matters makes the Israelite council and the rationale for adaptation and alteration comprehensible.

As implied in Schloen's treatment of patrimonial concerns in the Baal Cycle, along with the explicit terminology involved, the top two tiers of the divine council at Ugarit should be understood in terms of a divine family. At the top tier are the divine parents, followed in descending order by their children, "the seventy sons of Athirat," who are the leading member gods of the council.[236] The family/sonship nomenclature was the primary litmus test for inclusion in the second tier. Second-tier status was reserved only for those deities related to El. The *mlʾkm* are not "the sons of El" at Ugarit.

Inclusion in the second tier of the divine council is also marked in five other ways. First, as Mark S. Smith concludes in his most recent work on the council, "Deities were generally marked for holiness (*qdš*), as can be inferred from the general designation of deities as 'holy ones.'"[237] This appellation derives from the language of divine kinship, particularly the phrase *bn qdš*.[238] While this phrase can mean "sons of holiness," here *qdš* is "an epithet of El himself" and thus the more appropriate translation is "sons of the Holy One."[239] That the phrase applies to the second-tier deities is also apparent from its placement in parallel to *ʾilm* in the context of a meeting of the divine council with El present.[240] Although Smith does not make the assertion, his comments suggest that only those members of the Ugaritic divine council's first two tiers are described in such a

[236] Mark S. Smith, *Origins,* 55-56.
[237] Ibid. See also *DULAT* 2:695-696.
[238] *KTU* 1.2.III:19-20; 1.2.IV:20-22; 1.16.I:10-11. Wyatt comments (*Religious Texts*, 54, n. 78) that the translation of *qdš* as "(the goddess) Qudshu" is "a modern invention . . . [since] the Egyptian examples adduced in her reconstruction have the feminine indicator (*qdšt*)."
[239] Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 221 (cf. note 203). See also *DULAT* 2:696.
[240] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 94. *KTU* 1.2.III:19ff. (see Wyatt, *Religious Texts,* 54); *KTU* 1.2.I:20-22, 37-38.

way, so that holiness was an attribute shared *only* by members of the divine family, not the *mlʾkm*. This reflects Smith's firm separation between the second and third tiers.

Contrary to Smith's implied restriction of holiness to the first two tiers, messengers are given such an attribution. In one passage of the Baal Cycle, the Queen Mother Athirat sends two of her *mlʾkm* to deliver a message. One of the messengers is named *Qdš*.[241] That a mere servant of the council might be given such a name is not surprising, for at Ugarit the *mlʾkm* were referred to as *ʾilm*. When Baal's messengers, *Gpn* and *ʾUgr* are sent out with a message to the other gods, the Baal Cycle informs us that Anat "caught sight of the gods (*ʾilm*)."[242] This scene relates to the reason why *mlʾkm* are referred to as *ʾilm*. When *mlʾkm* are referred to as *ʾilm*, the context is uniformly that of messengers being sent out by gods of higher rank. *Mlʾkm* are called *ʾilm* because they represent second-tier deities before an audience. This is an important element in the discussion below related to vice regency and why the מלאך יהוה is at times indistinguishable from Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible. The מלאך יהוה is the lone divine being in the Hebrew Bible in which Yahweh places the divine Name (Exod 20:20-23).[243]

These observations are also important with respect to the Hebrew Bible's use of the appellation "holy ones" (קדשים) for members of the heavenly host. To be sure, the second-tier אלהים of the Israelite divine council are קדשים.[244] Ps 89:6-8 clearly mentions the סוד קדשים ("council of the holy ones") and the קהל קדשים ("assembly of the holy ones") specifically in reference to the בני אלים ("sons of God/the gods").[245] Yahweh is the Holy One, and the holiness of the members of his council, his sons, derives from him. Second Temple canonical texts make the same connection, as the phrase אלהין קדישין ("the holy gods")

---

[241] *DULAT* 2:697. See *KTU* 1.3.VI:10-11.
[242] *KTU* 1.3.III:32. Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 78.
[243] In two instances human beings are called מלאך יהוה (Mal 2:7, the priest; Hag 1:13, the prophet Haggai). I know of no scholar who would argue that these human beings are theophanies or were the מלאך יהוה of pre-exilic Israelite religion. There is also no indication that the divine Name is placed in these individuals. The מלאך יהוה as a divine personage is the visible manifestation of Yahweh, the visual equivalent of the Name and other personified attributes of Yahweh. See H. B. Huffmon, "Name," *DDD,* 611; R. E. Clements, *God and the Temple: The Idea of the Divine Presence in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965); J. E. Fossum, *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord*, 76-87, 106-111.
[244] Wyatt, *Religious Texts*, 54, n. 78.
[245] Cf. earlier comments about the possibility of enclitic *mem* here.

occurs four times in the book of Daniel.[246] There are also several references in Daniel to a "holy one" (קדישׁ) or "holy ones" (קדישׁין) in apposition to עיר / עירין ("Watcher[s]"),[247] beings which, in non-canonical Second temple literature are appositional to the בני־האלהים. With respect to the מלאכים, it is quite remarkable that there is not a single occurrence in the Hebrew Bible where the noun מלאך is ever modified by קדשׁ.[248] The apparent implication is that, like the Ugaritic council, only the divine sons, the second-tier gods, are holy ones in late canonical and non-canonical texts. A comparison of Job 4:18 and 15:15, however, renders such a conclusion untenable, since the parallelisms between those texts link מלאכים and קדשׁים, thereby indicating that קדשׁים is a general term for any member of the heavenly populace, regardless of status.

Of greater dissimilarity are the facts that, in the Hebrew Bible, faithful Israelites are called קדשׁים,[249] and Israel is spoken of in terms of divine sonship. Corporate Israel is also described as Yahweh's "son" (Exod 4:22-23) and "sons of the living God" (Hos 2:1, Hebrew). The Israelite king is spoken of in divine sonship terms (Ps 2:7; 45:6) and, as an Israelite and representative of Yahweh on his throne, was to be holy.[250]

Second Temple literature makes use of all these motifs and connections in its own theology of the divine council. For example, the book of Daniel refers to the faithful of Israel as "holy ones" (Dan 7:21-22; 25-27) and as "shining like the brightness of the firmament" and "as the stars" (Dan 12:1-3). Daniel's "holy ones" also share the kingdom rule with the Most High and his vice-regent.[251] The explicit teaching in the *Shabbat Shirot* and other sectarian texts from Qumran, that the sect's faithful would be numbered among the sons of God and the divine council, has long been noted by scholars.[252] The idea is even carried into the New Testament as well, where followers of Christ are referred to as "sons of God" and "holy ones."[253] The current mainstream

---

[246] Dan 4:5-6, 15; 5:11. While it is true that the phrase in these texts is placed in the mouth of Gentiles, it is consistent with pre-exilic Israelite divine council language.

[247] Dan 4:10, 14, 20. It is clear from the context of Daniel 4 that the phrase עִיר וְקַדִּישׁ does not denote two different classes of beings. There is only one being (note the 3ms subject of the verbs) conversing in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

[248] The results of a computer search for the roots *קדשׁ* and *מלאכ* in the same verse in the Hebrew Bible produce no occurrences of singular מלאך or plural מלאכים being described as holy.

[249] See Deut 33:3; Pss 16:3; 34:10; Isa 62:12; Dan 8:24; 12:7. The more common term for the faithful, though, is חסידים.

[250] See Pss 2:6, 89:19-21 (Hebrew).

[251] For divine vice regency in Daniel, particularly against the backdrop of the Baal Cycle, see Chapter Six.

[252] See Chapter Seven for the relevant passages.

[253] For New Testament references to Christians as the "sons of God," see John 1:12; Rom 8:14, 19; Phil 2:15; 1 John 3:1-2). The term

view—that a divine council with second-tier אלהים disappeared during the exile—not only overlooks the continuity of the language of divine plurality in Second Temple texts, but eviscerates important elements of Second Temple Judaism by dismissing this language.

Smith's second indicator of an intermediate tier divine being is that the holiness of El and his progeny is imparted to places or objects. As Smith notes in his study of the connection between holiness, cult places, and cult objects, only beneficent gods (as opposed to cosmic enemies / monsters) received sacred mountains and cult sites, which are "extensions of divinity."[254] These beneficent gods are the sons of El and Athirat; the *mlʾkm* are by definition excluded from worship or sacred spaces.[255] Only members of the El's family possessed holy places or occupied divine mountains. Hence Baal's mountain, *Ṣapānu*, is called holy.[256] Yahweh's mountain, like *Ṣapānu*, is the cosmic center, and therefore holy, as is the temple, its vessels, and ritual objects like the ark of the covenant.[257] In Second Temple Jewish thought, the Watchers of 1 Enoch—considered the sons of God of the Hebrew Bible—had their own sacred mountain, Mount Hermon. The only divine beings who inherit or rule mountains or sacred sites are those whose second-tier status is made clear by associated vocabulary and motifs.

Third, as divine sons, each member of the second tier was given specific and respective spheres of control to rule (*mlk*) under the overarching sovereignty of El and his vice-regent.[258] In a divine council scene in *KTU* 1.2, when the gods of the council, the *bn qdš* ("sons of the Holy One"), see the messengers of Yamm they "lower their heads . . . onto the thrones of their princeships."[259] In *KTU* 1.16.V:24-25 El commands, "sit my children in your seats, on your princely thrones." El, Baal, Yamm, Mot, and Athtar are all "kings" in Ugaritic literature, and Yamm and Mot are both described as "Beloved of El" (Yamm *mdd ʾil*, Mot *ydd ʾil*), "a title which represents the oracular authority designating an heir to the throne."[260]

"saints" (ἁγίοι and other plural forms) is quite common in the New Testament (e.g., Acts 26:10; Rom 1:7; 8:27; 1 Cor. 14:33; Eph 1:1; Phil 1:1). See B. Byrne, *"Sons of God"—"Seed of Abraham": A Study of the Idea of the Sonship of God of All Christians in Paul Against the Jewish Background.*

[254] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 28-31, 77.

[255] Ibid., 28-31.

[256] *KTU* 1.3.III:29-30; 1.16.I:7.

[257] For example, see Isa 11:9; 56:7; 57:13; Ezek 20:40; 28:14; Exod 26:34; 1 Kgs 8:4; 2 Chr 35:3; Pss 5:7; 11:4; 138:2; Mic 1:2; Hab 2:20.

[258] Handy, "Dissenting Deities," 21; idem, "A Solution for the Problem of Many MLKM," *UF* 20 (1988): 58.

[259] *KTU* 1.2.I: 24-25, 27-29.

[260] Wyatt, "Quaternities in the Mythology of Baʿal," *UF* 21 (1989): 453. See also N. Wyatt, "'Jedidiah' and Cognate Forms as a Title of Royal Legitimation," *Bib* 66 (1985): 112-125.

Other titles given to ruling deities at Ugarit include *zbl* (“prince”)[261] and *ṯpṭ* (“judge”).[262] The latter can mean more than a judicial function, as indicated by the Baal Cycle, where Yamm is called “prince [*zbl*] Yamm” in parallel to “Ruler [*ṯpṭ*] Naharu” several times.[263] The parallel terms also occur with respect to Baal.[264] The word *ṯpṭ* is typically understood as “judge” but, according to Handy and others, “should be understood as a designation for a ruler, parallel to *mlk,* ‘king.’”[265] Pardee agrees with this assessment when he notes “One of Yammu’s standard titles in these texts is *ṯpṭ nhr*, where the first word is the old West Semitic term *ṯāpiṭu*, denoting a tribal / clan ruler.”[266] The word is used with deities at Ugarit to denote “a god who passes judgment” over a specific geographical territory (*ʾil ṯpẓ b TN*).[267]

These spheres of authority dispensed and approved by El could be over a geographical region or a natural phenomenon, and fit together into a coherent administration of the cosmos and the earth.[268] El’s decisions on establishing these dominions are described most often with the verb *mlk* (“to rule”),[269] though the Ugaritic texts also utilize *kn* and *škn* (“establish, assign”).[270] With respect to a territorial rule, in Ugaritic religion the patron deity was responsible for appointing a human ruler or dynastic succession to maintain order as a human regent in the god’s place.[271] Any one of these rulers, divine or human, could be referred to as a *mlk*, or have the exercise of his authority described with the verb *mlk*.[272]

With respect to the Israelite divine council, the connection of the vocabulary of royalty to the sons of God along with its associated “sphere sovereignty” is a significant correspondence to the Ugaritic council hierarchy. The idea of a lead sovereign (מלך) governing along with royal princes (שׂרים), the viceroys of

[261] *DULAT* 2:998.
[262] *DULAT* 2:926.
[263] For example, see *KTU* 1.2.III:15-16, 21-25; 1.2.IV:29-30.
[264] For *zbl, s*ee *KTU* 1.5.VI:9-10; 1.6.I:41-43; 1.6.III:2-3, 8-9, 20-21; 1.6.IV:4-5, 15-16;1.9:18; 1. For *ṯpṭ*, see *KTU* 1.3.V:32-33 and 1.4.IV:43-44.
[265] Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven*, 113. Handy cites René Dussaud, “Les Combats sanglants de ʿAnat et le pouvir universal de El (V AB et VI AB),” *RHR* 118 (1938): 151, n. 8, and J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan (2d ed.; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 87. See also C. Gordon, “ṯpṭ,” *Ugaritic Textbook* (AnOr 38; Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1969) and “שׁפט,”*KBL* (2d ed., Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958). Wyatt also points out that the Punic term šopeṭ is “frequently translated in Greek and Latin texts by their equivalents for *mlk*, βασιλευς and *rex*” (Wyatt, “Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God,” 422).
[266] “The Baʿlu Myth,” translated by Dennis Pardee (*COS* 1.86:245, n. 36).
[267] *DULAT* 2:926.
[268] Handy, “Dissenting Deities,” 21; idem, “The Authorization of Divine Power and the Guilt of God in the Book of Job: Useful Ugaritic Parallels,” *JSOT* 60 (1993): 108.
[269] *DULAT* 2:549. For example, *KTU* 1.6.I:47-55, the installation of Athtar, uses this verb four times.
[270] *DULAT* 1:447, 2:815. See *KTU* 1.3.V:36 for *kn* and *KTU* 1.16.26-27 for *škn.*
[271] Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven*, 112.

government,[273] is drawn from the royal human bureaucracy (cf. Isa 32:1). In pre-exilic Israelite texts, Deut 32:8-9 articulates an Israelite worldview where the second-tier בני־האלהים are placed over the nations of the earth, while Israel is Yahweh's inheritance. Deities such as Chemosh are considered to rule over regions and people groups,[274] and Naaman's request to carry dirt from the land of Israel evinces the belief that gods were connected to geography.[275] David's concern that he had been driven from his share in Yahweh's inheritance also reflects the same worldview.[276]

However, none of this should be taken as an indication that Yahweh's global lordship is a late idea. As noted in the Introduction, the earliest texts of the Hebrew Bible reflect a belief in Yahweh's global reign.[277] For example, there is no biblical proof for the idea that pre-exilic Israelites viewed Yahweh as equal to (much less beneath) Chemosh in authority. Additionally, Naaman's request as written by the Dtr presupposes Yahweh's ability to judge him outside Israel, and David's concern (again, typical of Dtr concerns) is related to cultic obligations and priestly intercession that was restricted to Judah in practical terms. The possession and governance of the surrounding nations by other gods must therefore be viewed in the context of hierarchical bureaucratic authority.

Psalm 82, a passage which most scholars consider a late composition that makes anachronistic use of pre-exilic Israelite beliefs,[278] also links the second-tier gods to the rule[279] of the earth when the plural אלהים (v.1), the בני עליון (v.6), are asked, "how long will you judge (תשפטו) unjustly . . .?" Rather than perform the commands to render justice laid down in 82:3-4, the gods of the council have become corrupt, resulting in the foundations of the earth being out of course (v.5). As punishment the gods are told in verse six, "you will die (תמותון) like humankind (כאדם) and fall like any of the princes (שׂרים)." Although the reference to

---

[272] Handy, "Many MLKM," 57-58.
[273] P.A.H. deBoer, "The Counsellor," in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley* (ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas; JSOTSup 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955), 49.
[274] Judg 11:24-25.
[275] 2 Kgs 5:17-18.
[276] 1 Sam 26:19.
[277] Cf. Patrick D. Miller, "Israelite Religion," 166; Cross and Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, 45, n. 59.
[278] See Chapter Three for a critique of this perspective as it relates to the divine council. The chapter also contains discussion of the use of Deut 32:8-9 by the Psalmist.
[279] Recall the work of Handy and Wyatt on שׁפט as "rule" (footnote 224). This understanding is in concert with Psalm 82's relationship to Deut 32:8-9 as discussed in Chapter Three.

princes certainly refers to any human ruler in light of the parallelism, the cosmic-geographical worldview of Deut 32:8-9 which the psalm utilizes makes a double entendre possible. Ps 82:6 may imply that the gods will be put to death just as any of the human princely rulers in their individual sphere of divine governance can be dispatched. Even the high God's own human regent, Adam, was so sentenced after becoming corrupt in his own stewardship of Eden, the cosmic center.[280]

As was the case with the connection of the gods to the description "holy ones," the clearest references to princely rulers of the divine realm exercising terrestrial rule are found in Second Temple literature. Dan 10:13, 20, 21 and 12:1 specifically indicates that nations (including Israel) have an assigned heavenly prince (שׂר). This description does not match the מלאכים class in the divine council. At no time in Ugaritic literature or the Hebrew Bible are the מלאכים said to govern territory, nor are they ever referred to in royal terms.

Fourth, and closely related to the idea that the second-tier gods are governing princes in the council hierarchy, second-tier divine sons are distinguished in the Ugaritic divine council from the lowest tier of the מלאכים by independence or freedom. This freedom is not to be understood as complete autonomy, for "gods in the second tier . . . are always subject to divine veto from the highest tier."[281] As Handy states:

> The act of running the cosmos has been left to other deities. . . . These deities are allowed a certain amount of freedom in their actions. They are turned loose to do what they do best . . . [but] messengers (*mlʾkm*) are ordered about by the other gods. . . . They have no independent authority . . . [and] are without independent volition.[282]

The Hebrew Bible contains a number of references to divine beings possessing freedom to act independently under the sovereignty of Yahweh. Aside from the implied freedom to govern in references like Deut 32:8-9 and Psalm 82, the episodes in Job 1-2 where the sons of God assemble before Yahweh are frequently noted in this regard. Specifically it is the *saṭan* who most clearly exercises his freedom to dispute with Yahweh. Scholars have long recognized that the *saṭan* is performing a well-defined role for council activity at Ugarit that was carried over into the Hebrew Bible. Quoting Handy once again:

> The Satan works for God, not against him . . . [his] duty is to patrol the universe for those who break the rules of the cosmic authority of Yahweh. . . . We are clearly not dealing with a

---

[280] The same verb form as in Ps 82:6, תמותון, is used in Gen 3:14.
[281] Handy, "Appearance of Pantheon," 35.
[282] Handy, "Dissenting Deities," 20, 23-24.

> member of the lowest level of divinities. . . . While the Satan is given some autonomy in the attack upon Job, the parameters of allowable action are clearly established by Yahweh. . . . The exact method of carrying out the tests is left to the Satan.[283]

1 Kgs 22:19-23 also describes interaction on the part of members of the divine council with respect to affairs on earth:

> 19 Micaiah continued, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. 20 And the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?' One suggested this, and another that. 21 Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.' 22 'By what means?' the LORD asked. 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,' he said. 'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the LORD. 'Go and do it.' 23 So now the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you."

P. D. Miller references the Dtr's description of the deliberations within Yahweh's council to entice Ahab to go against Ramoth-Gilead in this passage to highlight the volitional ability of council members:

> [1 Kings 22 describes] the working out of the Lord's plan and revealing it to the Lord's true prophet. The decree is clearly that of the Lord. It is Yahweh's word that initiates the conversation in council. But conversation and discussion do go on about how to implement the Lord's plan.[284]

More generally, but still with the volition of the gods of the council in view, Miller notes that:

> The rule of the cosmos is in the hands of Yahweh, but the context in which that rule takes place is the activity of the council where Yahweh's decrees directing the human community and divine world are set forth and through whom they are communicated or enacted.[285]

The idea that the second-tier gods govern under the authority of the High God in both the Ugaritic and Israelite council rebuts a common argument offered by those who contend that the council disappeared from Israel's religion. Scholars frequently note that the pre-exilic council gods threatened to "diminish the centrality of power in the single deity."[286] According to this view, the crisis of the exile and Yahweh's apparent defeat made it absolutely necessary for the exiles to see their God as supreme, necessitating the elimination of any divine competition. This argument does not cohere. There is no hint at Ugarit that El's position and power were threatened by the second tier. Virtually all scholars of Ugaritic religion would now agree with Wyatt that "the

---

283 Handy, "The Authorization of Divine Power," 109, 117.
284 Patrick D. Miller, "Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as Cosmic-Political Symbol," in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays* (JSOTSup 267; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 431.
285 Ibid., 426.
286 Handy, "Dissenting Deities," 27.

old theory of El's emasculation and deposition may now be discarded. . . . His authority is unquestioned."[287] Likewise, pre-exilic Yahwism is not threatened in any regard by the gods of the council. Yahweh in pre-exilic Israelite religion is incomparable (Exod 15:11) and "has been enthroned as king forever" (Ps 24:7-10; 29:10).

The fifth and final criterion for distinguishing the gods of the council's second tier from the lower tier beings is nonverbal indication of rank. Scholars have noticed that in the Baal Cycle all the gods of the second tier pay obeisance to El, "but nowhere is it said that El, being the superior god, is expressing obeisance to anyone."[288] The second-tier gods "never pay homage to one another and the messengers who belong to the lowest rank always prostrate themselves before others, but others never honour them."[289] M. Smith has argued that traveling denotes rank as well. The second-tier gods travel to El's abode, but El never visits another deity, indicating El's superior status.[290] Posture in council meetings also indicates rank,[291] and this form of nonverbal communication is more significant for the purposes of this study since Israel's religion excludes gods showing respect for one another or traveling to each other's abode. Both Ugaritic and Israelite descriptions of council proceedings have one or more gods standing or sitting on multiple thrones. As subsequent discussion will note, though this vocabulary takes on technical status in the context of the divine council, its importance varies depending on what is transpiring in the scene. More extended comments in this regard are deferred to the discussion below on Baal's role as vice-regent and other chapters.

2.5 *The Status and Role of the Vice-Regent*

The data for vice regency are drawn from Ugaritic religion. Under the authority of El, the most powerful office in the divine bureaucracy of Ugarit was the position of overlord of the gods. As scholars have long recognized, it is this office, the right to be the one who "rules over the gods," that is the focus of the conflicts between Yamm, Baal, and Mot in the Baal Cycle. Within the context of El's supreme command of the pantheon and modern scholarship's virtually unanimous conclusion that El was not displaced by Baal at

---

[287] Wyatt, "Quaternities," 453.
[288] P. A. Kruger, "Rank Symbolism in the Baal Epic: Some Further Indicators," *UF* 27 (1995): 170.
[289] Ibid. See the ensuing discussion for how this statement can be upheld in connection with the reaction of the sons of El to the appearance of the messengers of Yamm.
[290] Mark S. Smith, "Divine Travel as a Token of Rank," *UF* 16 (1984): 359.
[291] Kruger, "Rank Symbolism," 170.

Ugarit,[292] the position claimed by Baal merits consideration in terms of vice regency and as the backdrop to Israel's monolatrous adaptation of divine vice-regency.

Baal must fight rivals for the right to rule the other gods. Once he emerges victorious, he is given the titles of "most high" (*ʿly*),[293] "king, sovereign"(*mlk*),[294] and "[the one] who rules over the gods" (*d ymlk ʿl ʾilm).*[295] The Baal Cycle reads that the response to Baal's victory is *tgr ʾil bnh*, which de Moor renders as "El appointed his son deputy."[296] Baal is thus referred to as "lord" or "ruler" (*yw*) of the gods.[297] The rendering "god of the gods" is also possible, according to Wyatt, who remarks, "The apparent sense was 'lord', or even 'god', given the equation in BM93035 *ʾilu = yau.*"[298] Baal also earns the title *zbl bʿl arṣ* , a title "found on nine occasions . . . but never used until Baal's victory over Yamm is assured."[299] This title "appears to indicate that the conflict between Baal and Yamm is concerned with lordship of the earth."[300] This would make contextual sense, since the other sons of El were princes over geographic regions of the earth, while their ruler would have authority over them and their individual earthly provinces. The title therefore is another reminder that Baal is king over the second-tier gods under El. Lastly, in the divine council scene of *KTU* 1.2.I:20ff., while the second-tier gods of the council are sitting (*yṯb*) on their princely thrones, Baal is described as "standing by El" (*qm ʿl ʾil*).[301] The phrase comes at the point in the Baal Cycle where Yamm challenges the gods of the council to surrender Baal, "the god whom you obey."[302] The gods of the council are described in cringing posture at the demand, and are rebuked by Baal.

---

[292] Wyatt's comment, noted previously in the discussion, is worth repeating here: "The old theory of El's emasculation and deposition may now be discarded . . . His authority is unquestioned" (Wyatt, "Quaternities," 453). The older view of El's otiose nature and displacement now has anomaly status in Ugaritic scholarship.
[293] *DULAT* 1:169. *KTU* 1.16.III:6,8. See Wyatt, "The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God," 419.
[294] *DULAT* 2 :550. *KTU* 1.3.V: 32; 1.4.IV:43
[295] *KTU* 1.4.VIII:50. This title was also used of Yamm before he was defeated by Baal (*KTU* 1.1.IV.11-14).
[296] Johannes C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Baʿlu* (Kevalaer / Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 118. *KTU* 1.1.IV:10-11. See also *DULAT* 1:310. Wyatt translates "El appointed his son regent," and references de Moor's opinion that the form in the text should be a Dt (<*y*>*tgr*) from the root *gr*. The translation is derived from the Arabic cognate *ǧarrā* [*y*] (Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 48, note 49). It should be noted that the more traditional rendering of the phrase *tgr ʾil bnh* ("El has opposed his son") is also quite possible, given the Hebrew cognate *grh* ("to oppose"; cf. *HALOT* 1:202; *DULAT* 1:926). The problem is that the phrase describes El's *response* to Baal's victory, and so "oppose" seems awkward.
[297] *KTU* 1.1.IV:10-11. Wyatt suggests that Ugaritic *yw* "is probably a Sanskrit loan word (*yau*<*dyaus*) occurring in various Near Eastern contexts, including, perhaps, the DN Yahweh" (Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 48, note 51). Wyatt's idea regarding the divine name derivation is supported by few (cf. J.C. de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism*, 113-118). See Karel van der Toorn, "Yahweh," *DDD,* 911; idem, "Anat-Yahu, Some Other Deities, and the Jews of Elephantine," *Numen* 39 (1992): 88-92.
[298] Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 48, n. 51.
[299] Wyatt, "The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God," 416.
[300] Ibid.
[301] The translation is that of Wyatt (Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 60). The purpose would no doubt be for service as vice-regent.
[302] Ibid., 61. See *KTU* 1.2.I:34, and the earlier reference in *KTU* 1.2.I:17-18.

The interchange is curious, for Yamm at the time is referred to as the "ruler of the gods" but since Baal is the god who is obeyed in council, Yamm must challenge him. Wyatt notes in this regard, "though Baal is Yamm's successor on the divine throne, it appears from the present passage that he also had a prior claim to it, but was passed over by El in favour of Yamm."[303] Schloen's patrimonial approach to the Baal Cycle comes to mind as an explanation here, but regardless of how one parses the cosmic intrigue, Baal's position in the council as standing by El (the context is a meal, not a trial)[304] is in some way connected to the perception among the gods of the council that they owe Baal obeisance. Hence the Baal Cycle in its entirety clarifies who ultimately earns the kingship of the gods under El. The two powers in the Ugaritic heaven are certainly El and Baal.

The monolatrous nature of Israel's religion meant a degree of divergence in function and description. It is recognized that there were varieties of Yahwism in pre-exilic Israel that may have seen Asherah as a consort figure, but the "official" Yahwists who produced the Hebrew Bible excluded this idea, if it indeed existed at all, from the canonical text. But while the idea of a consort was apparently objectionable, the concept of vice-regency was not.[305]

From an early stage, Israel adapted the role of a vice-regent in the divine council so that it was allowable in a monolatrous context and did not violate the *Shema*. At Ugarit, though El was the ultimate sovereign, El and Baal exercised rule over all the other gods of the council. El and Baal were separate deities, and since other gods (Yamm) also bear Baal's rulership titles early in the Baal Cycle, the vice-regency was apparently something for which gods fought. In official Yahwism, on the other hand, the vice-regent position could not be held by Baal. Rather than allow Baal a position in the council—even under Yahweh's authority—Israelite prophets and scribes appropriated Baal's epithets and authority for Yahweh himself. The vice-regent in Israelite

[303] Ibid., 49, n. 55.
[304] See Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 230-232 for a discussion of the vocabulary of "standing" in the council. However, Mullen focuses only on "legal" decision-making contexts of council scenes.
[305] This distinction would be especially noteworthy if McCarter's thesis is correct. McCarter theorizes that Asherah in the Kuntillet ʿAjrud and Khirbet el-Qôm inscriptions is the hypostasis of Yahweh, not a goddess. See P. Kyle McCarter, "Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data," 137-156. Mark S. Smith (*The Early History of God*, 121-124) objects to this view, but as Seth Sanders points out, while Mark S. Smith is critical of McCarter he fails to provide a more coherent alternative (Seth Sanders, review of Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God* [2d revised ed.], *JHS* 4 (2002-2003): 3, n.p. [cited 17 Jan 2004]. Online: http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/JHS/reviews/review119.htm). Sanders correctly points out that some of Mark S. Smith's "secular uses" (i.e., non-hypostatic) uses of פנים ("face") are not all secular in context. Specifically, Gen 33:10 and Exod 33:15-17 undermine Mark S. Smith's rebuttal. Sanders also notes that the example of Exod 23:21 "describes a clear angelic hypostasis of the Lord" because of the presence of the Name. Mark S. Smith seems to admit that such a category is legitimate in Israelite religion when he says that the goddess known as "Tannit-face-of-Baal" was actually the "representation" of Baal. There seems to be little discernible difference

religion was a divine being considered an extension of Yahweh himself. That is, the vice-regent is Yahweh's hypostasis.

This construct contextualizes the term מלאך יהוה. At Ugarit, the messenger (*mlʾk*) represents the deity as though the deity was present. This dramatic "extension of personality" is illustrated in the Baal Cycle (*KTU* 1.2.I:10ff.). The messengers sent by Yamm to demand that El relinquish Baal speak with Yamm's voice as though Lord Nahar were actually present. The frightened reaction of the second-tier gods at the appearance of what would ordinarily be mere servants is telling, for they respond as though Lord Yamm was actually present. It is in this extended passage that the *mlʾkm* are referred to as *ʾilm*, and the reason is clear given the bureaucratic character of the council. These *mlʾkm* are serving as extensions of the person of Yamm, Lord Nahar, and thus they are virtual *ʾilm*, their presence being understood as though Lord Nahar were there "in person." They are not *ʾilm*; they only represent Yamm/Nahar as though he was present.

This "personal extension" dynamic is in operation in the Hebrew Bible's portrayal of the relationship between the מלאך יהוה and Yahweh. This special agent of Yahweh and Yahweh himself are at times virtually indistinguishable, yet the מלאך יהוה is not Yahweh. The issue is clarified if one recalls the infusion of the divine name in this particular מלאך (Exod 23:20-23). This מלאך had power to withhold forgiveness of sins and is consistently described—interchangeably with Yahweh—as the One who would defeat the inhabitants of the land of Canaan.[306] The interplay between the deliverance of Israel by the angel who bears the Name and the deliverance by Yahweh himself is indicative that a principal angel is in mind, not just any indefinite member of the heavenly host.[307] Moreover, in Jacob's encounter with the human figure at the river Jabbok, the being

---

between a divine "representation" and hypostasis.

[306] Any view of the מלאך יהוה which posits that any heavenly being could assume that role must account for these elements: the presence of the Name, the power of forgiveness, and the identification with Yahweh as deliverer. There is no indication in the text that the position of the מלאך יהוה rotated among members of the heavenly host. In contrast, the writers and redactors of the received text create subtle linkages between various passages that suggest they viewed this being as a single recurring figure in the divine drama. See the ensuing discussion for these linkages, noted by the rabbis with respect to the two powers controversy.

[307] See also Exod 33:2; Judg 2:1-3. In the latter the מלאך יהוה speaks in the first person as Yahweh who brought Israel out of Egypt. Compare the list of nations in Exod 23:20-23, whom the מלאך יהוה would defeat, with those passages that describe Yahweh as the one who defeats the same nations (Exod 3:1-9, 17; 34:11; Deut 7:1-2, 22-23; Jos 3:10; 11:1-6; 24:1-10; Judg 1:4-5. It is also clear that, even in the passages that are said to be the most "confusing" in regard to parsing the relationship between Yahweh and the מלאך יהוה, the two are in fact distinguished. For example, in Judges 6, after the מלאך יהוה leaves Gideon (v. 21) Yahweh still speaks to him directly (v.23). Other passages that have the מלאך יהוה speaking in the first person as Yahweh are not difficult to explain given the "extension of personality" concept. When messengers spoke in the Hebrew Bible and other ancient near eastern literature, they often used the first

with whom Jacob wrestled is eventually recognized by him as an אלהים (one who refused to reveal his name), prompting Jacob to name the place פנואל. Hearkening back to this event, the prophet Hosea (12:3ff., Hebrew) says of Jacob:

4 בַּבֶּטֶן עָקַב אֶת־אָחִיו וּבְאוֹנוֹ שָׂרָה אֶת־אֱלֹהִים׃
5 וַיָּשַׂר אֶל־מַלְאָךְ וַיֻּכָל
בָּכָה וַיִּתְחַנֶּן־לוֹ בֵּית־אֵל יִמְצָאֶנּוּ וְשָׁם יְדַבֵּר עִמָּנוּ׃

4 In the womb he took his brother by the heel;
in his strength he strove with God (אלהים).
5 Yes, he strove with an angel (מלאך), and prevailed:
he wept, and made supplication to him;
he found him in Bethel, and there he spoke with us.

The same correlation is struck by Jacob at the end of his life (Gen 48:15-16), where the patriarch asks God—the Angel in parallelism—to bless Joseph and his sons:

15 וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶת־יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמַר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְּכוּ אֲבֹתַי לְפָנָיו אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק
הָאֱלֹהִים הָרֹעֶה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדִי עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃
16 הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגֹּאֵל אֹתִי מִכָּל־רָע יְבָרֵךְ אֶת־הַנְּעָרִים וְיִקָּרֵא בָהֶם שְׁמִי
וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק וְיִדְגּוּ לָרֹב בְּקֶרֶב הָאָרֶץ׃

15 And he blessed Joseph, and said, God (האלהים), before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God (האלהים) who fed me all my life to this day,
16 The Angel (המלאך) who redeemed me from all evil, bless the boys; and let my name be upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.

One must either interpret this verse as (1) an identification of the God of Israel as a מלאך, (2) a reference to God sending a מלאך to help Jacob, or (3) a particular מלאך is here considered a deity. The first is incoherent in light of Yahweh's incomparability among all the host of heaven throughout the Hebrew Bible. The second and third options are both possible, but the third is more likely. The use of the article with

person because the recipient of the message regarded the sender as being virtually "in person" (see the extended treatment of this "messenger-representative" phenomenon in *The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God* [Cardiff: University of Wales, 1961], 1-37. S. A. Maier objects to this explanation, arguing that "any messenger who failed to identify the one who sent him subverted the entire communication process" (S. A. Maier, "Angel of Yahweh," *DDD*, 58). As an argument against the מלאך יהוה being an extension of Yahweh via the role of the messenger, this argument lacks force. By the time of Judg 2:1-4 in the story of Israel's journey, it is abundantly clear to the audience who the angel represents by virtue of the implication of Exod 23:20-23, that the angel had been guiding Israel since leaving Egypt. In such "late" accounts, there was no need of identification. Indeed, the reader knows who this being represents from his first appearance in the canonical story (Gen 16:7) by virtue of the repetition of Yahweh's promise to Abraham on the

מלאך and the parallelism of המלאך to האלהים indicate a correspondence is being struck between a particular מלאך and the God of Israel. The only instance in Jacob's life where a single מלאך intervenes in his life occurs in Genesis 32, where Jacob wrestles with a "man" (32:25, Hebrew) but later Jacob claims to have seen God (אלהים) "face to face" (32:31, Hebrew). One could argue that the definite article refers to the particular מלאך in Genesis 32 and no more, yet this neither accounts for Jacob's claim (the narrative does not say Yahweh appeared with the מלאך) nor the parallelism in the Hosea passage above that deals with the same event. The most plausible interpretation of the Genesis 32 event and these passages is that this particular entity (המלאך) is the divinized מלאך in whom Yahweh's Name dwells.

In this regard, the Name theology of Deuteronomy and the Dtr deserves equal emphasis as an important key to understanding divine vice regency in Israel's monolatrous religion. Scholars have frequently pointed out that the divine Name of Yahweh "can be understood as a hypostasis of the deity,[308] and that in Deuteronomy God dwells in heaven but his Name dwells in the earthly sanctuary.[309] Mettinger has noted five principal terms (שׁכן, שׂום, היה, בית, קרא) commonly used in connection with שׁם to express the idea that the Name was an independent, localized, extension of Yahweh's own presence.[310] Several examples are especially illustrative:

Deut 12:11a

וְהָיָה הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשַׁכֵּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם

Then there shall be a place which the Lord your God shall choose to make his Name dwell there . . .

Deut 12:5

כִּי אִם־אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל־שִׁבְטֵיכֶם לָשׂוּם אֶת־שְׁמוֹ שָׁם
לְשִׁכְנוֹ תִדְרְשׁוּ וּבָאתָ שָּׁמָּה׃

But you shall seek the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his Name there; to his habitation shall you inquire, and there you will come.

1 Kgs 5:19 (Hebrew)

וְהִנְנִי אֹמֵר לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָי כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶל־דָּוִד אָבִי לֵאמֹר

---

part of the מלאך יהוה (Gen 16:10; cp. Gen 12:1-3; 15:5).

[308] Niehr, "Religio-Historical Aspects," 237.

[309] Compare Deut 4:36; 26:36 with Deut 12:5,11; 14:23; 16:11. For the Name dwelling in the sanctuary, see 2 Sam 7:13; 1 Kgs 3:2; 5:7; 8:12; 9:3,7; 2 Kgs 21:7; Ps 74:7. See T. N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (ConBOT 18; Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982), 38-79; I. Wilson, *Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy* (SBLDS 151; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 1-15.

[310] Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth*, 38-40.

בִּנְךָ אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן תַּחְתֶּיךָ עַל־כִּסְאֶךָ הוּא־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לִשְׁמִי׃
And, behold, I intend to build a house for the Name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to David my father, saying, Your son, whom I will set upon your throne in your place, he shall build a house for my Name.

2 Chr 20:9

אִם־תָּבוֹא עָלֵינוּ רָעָה חֶרֶב שְׁפוֹט וְדֶבֶר וְרָעָב נַעַמְדָה לִפְנֵי הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה
וּלְפָנֶיךָ כִּי שִׁמְךָ בַּבַּיִת הַזֶּה וְנִזְעַק אֵלֶיךָ מִצָּרָתֵנוּ וְתִשְׁמַע וְתוֹשִׁיעַ׃
If evil comes upon us, as the sword, judgment, pestilence, or famine, let us stand before this house and your presence (for your Name is in this house) and when we cry to you in our affliction, then you will hear and help.

Ps 74:7

שִׁלְחוּ בָאֵשׁ מִקְדָּשֶׁךָ לָאָרֶץ חִלְּלוּ מִשְׁכַּן־שְׁמֶךָ׃
They have cast fire into your sanctuary; they have cast down (in defilement) the dwelling place of your Name to the ground.

It should be pointed out that the presence of the Name on earth in the sanctuary in Deuteronomy and elsewhere was not designed to denote Yahweh's transcendence, since Yahweh is also repeatedly referenced on earth via the phrase לפני יהוה.[311] This juxtaposition of Yahweh in heaven yet present on earth and utilizing an extension of his person on earth might seem confusing or redundant, but a vice regency model clarifies the situation. The מלאך יהוה was the anthropomorphized Name, and his presence (or the Name's indwelling of the sanctuary) was understood as Yahweh himself being present. Divine immanence is the result, not divine distancing.

2.6 *Interpretation of Divine Hypostases and the Vice-Regent in Second Temple Texts*

This hypostatic vice-regency was the foundation for the "second power in heaven" belief articulated by Second Temple Jewish writers. It is the Canaanite context that provides the conceptual bridge between the Hebrew Bible and the later Jewish belief. Although he never established the connection between Israelite and Canaanite religion and the second power idea, Segal suspected as much:

> Let us [summarize] the previous findings about scriptural traditions. The dangerous passages include (1) Dan 7:9ff. and the speculation about the identity of the "son of man"; (2) the Exod 24 theophany, possibly together with other passages in the Bible where God is pictured in the form of a man; (3) the related descriptions of the angel of YHWH who carries the divine

[311] See Wilson, *Out of the Midst of the Fire*, 199-217.

> name; (4) scriptural verses which describe God as plural (Gen 1:26). . . . It is worthwhile to point out that many of these dangerous exegetical traditions may never have been entirely separate at any point in their development. Biblical scholars have recently noticed the relationship between all works describing the divine warrior figure (including both Exod 15 and Daniel 7) and ancient near eastern mythology.[312]

Segal's conjecture was based in part on his discovery that the rabbis of the Second Temple period linked the מלאך יהוה to the military figure of Josh 5:14-15, the שׂר־צבא־יהוה ("the Prince of the host of Yahweh"), whom they understood to be "the man of war" of Exod 15:3.[313] The rabbis based this correlation on Num 22:23 where the description of the מלאך יהוה includes the detail, וְחַרְבּוֹ שְׁלוּפָה בְּיָדוֹ ("and his sword [was] drawn in his hand") the exact phrase found in Josh 5:13's description of Prince of the host of Yahweh. Second Temple writers and later rabbis also linked מלאך יהוה (and thus the שׂר־צבא־יהוה) to figures in the book of Daniel: The prince (שׂר) of the host, the prince (שׂר) of princes (שׂר־שׂרים), and the "one like a son of man"—the only other heavenly being besides the מלאך יהוה to bear a name of Yahweh.[314] All of the roles of these biblical figures correspond to roles of Baal in Ugaritic religion. Baal, of course, was the warrior god of Ugaritic religion. As the vice-regent of El he was also the prince who ruled all other second-tier divine beings in the Ugaritic council bureaucracy. That both Yahweh and his vice-regent performed Baal roles is expected in light of Israel's monolatry and description of the vice-regent as hypostasis of Yahweh.

The remainder of this study proceeds with an eye to the vocabulary, motifs, and bureaucratic structures discussed in this chapter. The divine council's survival in canonical literature from the exile afterward and in the non-canonical literature of the Second Temple period is readily discerned through a number of features:

- Identical or very similar phrases for a heavenly council and its associated mythological motifs, such as divine mountains and council meeting places.
- References to plural אלהים / אלים (בני), especially in divine council or throne room contexts, or evidence of more than one divine being who exercises authority in heaven and earth.
- The language of divine sonship with respect to these אלהים / אלים (בני), including royal titulary.
- Earthly geographical dominion by plural אלהים / אלים (בני) who outrank angels, or a worldview that reflects Deut 32:8-9.

---

[312] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 184.
[313] Segal, "Some Observations," 5.
[314] I refer here to the "rider upon the clouds" title. This and nearly identical phrases are used only of Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible, save for the "Son of Man" in Daniel 7. The title comes from a Baal epithet. This study considers the "one like a Son of Man" to be a deified figure, and so the phrase will hereafter be capitalized. See Chapter Six of the present study.

- Behavior on the part of heavenly council members or throne room characters that portrays some degree of independence.
- Vice-regent status, variously indicated by special terminology, proximity to the throne of God (e.g., God's right hand), or non-verbal indications of exaltation (e.g., seated on a heavenly throne).

With these criteria in mind, the next three chapters evaluate claims of the abandonment of the divine council's second tier of אלהים during a presumed redactional overhaul of the Hebrew Bible during the exilic and post-exilic periods.

Chapter Three

Assumptions of Exilic Redaction and the Progression From Polytheism to Monotheism: The Argument from Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 82

Having overviewed the terms, motifs, and structure of the divine council, our focus now turns to an evaluation of the theory that monotheism was a profound exilic innovation that required propagation and enforcement by means of a scribal agenda to eliminate or dilute Israel's antiquated polytheism. Since the divine council would reflect such outmoded polytheism, the theory postulates, references to the council and its members had to be expunged from the text or at least neutralized. The goal of this chapter is to show that the exilic and early post-exilic[315] canonical texts of the Hebrew Bible evince neither an evolution from monolatry to intolerant monotheism nor a redactional agenda that supported such a religious transition. Rather, this study proposes that Israel's religion prior to the exile was monolatry, and that the data of exilic and early post-exilic texts suggest that this religious worldview was maintained during these eras and well into the Common Era.[316]

3.1 *Text-Historical Assumptions and Late Israelite Religion*

This study does not contend that Jewish scholars and scribes were never troubled by passages that contained references to אלים and בני־האלהים, but would propose that not all Jews were troubled by divine plurality. That there were such concerns within scribal schools entrusted with the transmission of the text is obvious in light of the well-known textual variance in Deut 32:8-9, where the text underlying the LXX contains a reference to בני־האלהים ("sons of God") but the MT does not.[317] The consensus view of monotheistic evolution would contend that the polytheistic reading of LXX has the stronger claim to being original due to the fact that Israelite religion initially embraced other gods. However, it would also argue that the theologically neutral reading of the MT implicitly suggests an evolutionary leap to monotheism occurred during the time the

---

[315] I use this phrasing to exclude the book of Daniel, which will be considered in Chapter Six.
[316] My claim is not that Israelite religion never underwent any major changes. Exactly when Israel either merged El and Yahweh or comprehended that El and Yahweh were the same god is hotly debated by scholars but is beyond the scope of this study.

Torah was redacted. In addition, the consensus perspective assumes that the monotheistic reading arose during or shortly after the exile with the result that scribes systematically targeted polytheistic readings for elimination.

These assumptions are methodologically suspect for several reasons. The outlawed Hebrew reading underlying the LXX of Deut 32:8-9 did indeed survive total eradication. Since the reading was preserved and perpetuated by *Jewish* scribes, it is evident that there were learned Jews who were untroubled by its content. Assuming that post-exilic Israelite religion and later Judaism had unanimous rejected the pre-exilic worldview overlooks several salient facts.

First, scholars simply do not know when such variants arose in historical terms. The fact remains, for instance, that scholars cannot date the initial appearance of the MT reading of Deut 32:8. Given the manuscript evidence, it could have arisen well into the Second Temple period, but many scholars assume such changes were made much earlier due to their preconception of a monotheistic revolution after the exile. All scholars really know with certainty is that the most ancient textual data demonstrate textual diversity, not censorship.

Second, as far as text-critical scholars have determined, there is no evidence from the Second Temple period for the sort of textual suppression postulated by the assumption of a thoroughgoing exilic redaction driven by intolerant monotheism.[318] This is undeniable in light of the Qumran material—and Deut 32:8-9 is a pointed example—that has been found in support of LXX readings. As Ulrich notes, the text that underlies the Qumran reading for Deut 32:8-9, 4QDeut^{q}, "was not [a] new text form . . . pluriformity was the nature of the biblical text in the late Second Temple period."[319] It can be plausibly argued, then, that some forms of Second Temple Judaism saw no problem with the divine plurality of Deut 32:8-9. If scholars acknowledge that it is a fallacy to argue that Second Temple Judaism was a homogeneous institution, then it is equally fallacious, given the lack of textual censorship, to assert that Judaism after the exile was unanimously intolerant of divine plurality.

---

[317] Hereafter, Masoretic Text is abbreviated as MT.
[318] Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 116–117. See also S. Talmon, "The Old Testament Text," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* (ed. P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans; vol. 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 159–199; Ulrich, "Hebrew Scriptures," 106.
[319] Eugene Ulrich, "The Text of the Hebrew Scriptures at the Time of Hillel and Jesus," in *Congress Volume, Basel 2001* (ed. A. Lemaire; VTSup 92; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002), 95.

Third, scholars who specialize in textual criticism think it more probable that deliberate changes were made for theological reasons later rather than earlier, when the text was being "standardized" circa 100 C.E.[320] In the case of Deut 32:8-9, one would suspect a later manipulation of the text as opposed to an exilic provenance because an original deletion would require the subsequent *addition* of the controversial reference to the בני־האלהים to produce the textual diversity evidenced at Qumran. These kinds of textual changes make far more sense in a first century C.E. context than as oversights in MT that "survived" an assumed editorial zeal for exclusivistic monotheism. Deferring to Ulrich's expertise once more:

> There was no standard text of the Bible (in fact no Bible as such) in the late Second Temple period. The Masoretic Text is not the central text of the Hebrew Bible, though it long appeared to be—just as the earth is not the central body of the universe, though it long appeared to be. The Masoretic Text is a chance collection from a wide pool of circulating texts.[321]

In another publication Ulrich adds:

> Even if there were standard texts for each book, presumably they would have to be the texts championed by the Pharisees and then adopted by rabbinic Judaism to be meaningful as the "standard text" that eventually became the Masoretic Text. But is there any evidence to suggest that the Pharisees were aware that they had texts which differed from the ones in use by Temple priests, or that they had the religious authority—acknowledged by any other groups within Judaism—to claim that their texts were standard and others not so? To my knowledge, there is no such evidence. . . . Lawrence Schiffman perceptively notes that 'the gradual transfer of influence and power from the priestly Sadducees to the learned Pharisees went hand in hand with the transition from Temple to Torah', i.e., during the period after the First Jewish Revolt (66-74). . . . Thus, though scholars had grown accustomed to equating the MT with the text and the contents of Judaism's authoritative Scriptures prior to the two revolts, that view must be recognized as in serious need of revision.[322]

This study, then, does not deny that some textual changes may have been motivated by theological concerns. Rather, this study questions the extent and uniformity of such concerns, and the use of chronological assumptions about such variances as evidence of an exilic or early post-exilic redactional campaign to enforce intolerant monotheism. The considerable amount of exilic and post-exilic material that affirms or implies the existence of other אלהים defies the explanation that a concerted, *systematic* campaign to replace the old

---

[320] E. Tov, "Textual Criticism (OT)," *ABD* VI: 395, 407.
[321] Ulrich, "Hebrew Scriptures," 98.
[322] Eugene Ulrich, "Qumran and the Canon of the Old Testament," in *The Biblical Canons, Proceedings of the 50th Colloquium Biblicum Lovianiense* (ed. J.M. de Jonge; BETL 163; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 63-64. See also Eugene Ulrich, "The Qumran Biblical Scrolls—The Scriptures of Late Second Temple Judaism," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context* (ed. Timothy H. Lim, et al.; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 67-87. The quotation from L. Schiffman is from L. Schiffman, *From Text to Tradition: A History of the Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1991), 112.

monolatrous worldview with intolerant monotheism was at work. If the data at issue were a mere handful of ambiguous texts, and if later Judaism showed no signs of embracing divine plurality, this view would have explanatory power. Neither of these circumstances is the case.

It is also not coherent to argue that scribes unflinchingly devoted to exclusivistic monotheism deliberately retained *affirmations* of other divine beings to persuade readers that these same beings did not exist. It is difficult to see how this perspective avoids the trap of arguing that intolerant monotheism was tolerant in the name of intolerance. It should also be pointed out that this perspective suffers from inconsistent application. For example, it is doubtful that late texts like Job 1:6ff. and 2:1ff., two of the most obvious passages affirming multiple divine beings (בני־האלהים) in the Hebrew Bible, are rhetorically arguing for intolerant monotheism. In other words, while scholars may deal with passages like Psalm 82 in such a way as to argue that it actually points to intolerant monotheism,[323] consistency demands that those who take this view demonstrate such rhetoric for all the late canonical material that affirms divine plurality. It is not sufficient to assert that texts reflect "older" religion without explaining the clarity of their monolatrous content in canonical material that post-dates the shift to intolerant monotheism.

There is no text-historical reason, then, for a systematic campaign to obscure or eradicate Israel's pre-exilic monolatry. There is also no need to posit that intolerant monotheists would build their rhetoric on the language of monolatry. Thus it is misguided to argue that the divine council was a threat to Israel's post-exilic religion[324] or that the post-exilic scribes needed to displace the pre-exilic divine assembly.[325] The remainder of this chapter devotes attention to the canonical text of Psalm 82 and Deuteronomy 32 since these passages have been utilized in recent works on Israelite religion to demonstrate these ideas. More specifically, these important chapters are offered as evidence of an antiquated polytheism in the Hebrew Bible that gradually evolved into monolatrous henotheism and then monotheism. This study argues, on the other hand, that those who composed and edited the Hebrew Bible articulated a monolatry that established a Yahweh-El identification, acknowledged the reality of other gods, but forbade their worship by Israel. It can of course be objected that popular religion

[323] For example, this is how Simon B. Parker ("The Beginning of the Reign of God," 532-559) interprets Psalm 82. This chapter challenges this view.
[324] Handy, "Dissenting Deities," 27.

and the religion of those who held political and religious power in Israel may at times have diverged from this worldview. The point made by this study is that those who produced the Hebrew Bible held to monolatry or "mono-Yahwism" before and after the exile.

3.2 *The Argument for Exilic Alteration or Elimination of the Divine Council*

Several influential scholars of Israelite religion have recently argued that the concept of the divine council was viewed by the redactors of the canon as an impediment on the path toward ever-tightening monotheism. According to Mark S. Smith, the prophetic condemnations of other deities, particularly the goddess Asherah, signals "[a] paradigmatic shift away from the model of the divine couple in charge of the four-tiered pantheon to a single figure surrounded by minor powers, who are expressions of that divinity's power."[326] Handy echoes this verdict when he says, "[T]he post-exilic world . . . [saw] the pantheon reduced to only two levels: that of the one highest authority and that of totally subservient messengers, leaving only one power actively running the universe."[327]

Simon Parker, in an important article on Psalm 82, asserts that the redactors of Psalm 82 "have modeled their myth on the common way of narrating a bid to displace the present ruler . . . in order to justify Yahweh's total displacement of the old pantheon and its assembly."[328] Mark S. Smith elaborates on the same idea:

> The author of Psalm 82 deposes the older theology, as Israel's deity is called to assume a new role as judge of all the world. Yet at the same time, Psalm 82, like Deut 32:8-9, preserves the outlines of the older theology it is rejecting. From the perspective of this older theology, Yahweh did not belong to the top tier of the pantheon. Instead, in early Israel the god of Israel apparently belonged to the second tier of the pantheon; he was not the presider god, but one of his sons. Accordingly, what is at work is not a loss of the second tier of a pantheon headed by Yahweh. Instead, the collapse of the first and second tiers in the early Israelite pantheon likely was caused by an identification of El, the head of this pantheon, with Yahweh, a member of the second tier.[329]

---

[325] Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 557.
[326] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 49.
[327] Handy, "Appearance of Pantheon," 42.
[328] Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 557. See also, Herbert Niehr, "Religio-Historical Aspects of the 'Early Post-Exilic' Period," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times* (ed. Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel; *OtSt* 42; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 241.
[329] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 49.

The alleged "collapse" referred to by Smith was therefore the result of Yahweh passing a death sentence on the gods of the other nations (Ps 82:6-7) so as to finally emerge as the just ruler of the universe.[330] In this way the psychological needs of the Israelite community were met.

To briefly elaborate, Smith believes that the collapse of the first and second tiers of the divine council "would have taken place by the eighth century, since Asherah, having been a consort of El, would have become Yahweh's consort . . . only if these two gods were identified by this time."[331] Prior to this time, then, Yahweh and El were separate deities in an older, polytheistic religion. Indeed, the former separation of El and Yahweh as father and son is an important element in their understanding of the council and its degradation. The reduction of the old pantheon was allegedly motivated by the "fully developed" monotheism of the post-exilic community.

These lines of argumentation are problematic in that the reasoning behind them is at times circular, and the textual data upon which they rest are considered in isolation from contemporaneous texts that support a different conclusion.

According to those who argue the divine council was displaced after the exile, the downgrading of the אלהים of the divine council in passages like Ps 82:1 to mere מלאכים must have occurred, since the alternative would amount to retaining pre-exilic polytheism. By this logic, the appearance of multiple אלהים (or אלים) in pre-exilic texts is to be understood as indicating polytheism, but when plural אלהים (or אלים) appear in exilic or post-exilic texts, they are to be understood as members of the fourth tier, the מלאכים. Hence Mark S. Smith's assertion (emphasis mine):

> [T]he Dead Sea scrolls frequently refer to *angelic* powers as *ʾlym*, literally, 'gods,' but *in the wake of the earlier telescoping of the pantheon and the collapse of its middle tiers*, this word probably conveyed the sense of heavenly powers (under One Power) *rather than full-fledged deities*.[332]

This assumed semantic shift is justifiable in Smith's thinking because he presumes that Jewish leaders during the exile and post-exilic periods were moving toward strict, exclusivistic monotheism, and they would not have retained an outdated word meaning as part of that evolution.

---

[330] Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 558.
[331] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 49.
[332] Ibid., 50. The italics are mine.

This rationale is ultimately based on conclusions that Smith and others have drawn from their exegetical work in Psalm 82 and Deut 32:8-9. Though the passages are ultimately interrelated, we will begin with Psalm 82.

3.3 *Psalm 82: Yahweh-El or Yahweh and El?*

Ps 82:1 is a focal point for the view that the tiers of the divine council collapsed in later Israelite religion:

אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בַּעֲדַת־אֵל בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט׃
God (*ʾlhym*) stands in the divine assembly;
in the midst of the gods (*ʾlhym*) he passes judgment.

Mark S. Smith contends that the wording in this verse "presents Yahweh in an explicit divine council scene [that] does not cast him as its head (who is left undecidedly mute or undescribed, probably the reason why it survived the later collapsing of the different tiers)."[333] In so doing, he draws on the work of Parker, whose study is the most recent attempt to distinguish Yahweh from El as originally separate entities in this psalm. While acknowledging that "there is no question that the occurrences of *ʾlhym* in verses 1a, 8 refer (as usually in the Elohistic psalter) to Yahweh," and that "most scholars assume that God, that is Yahweh, is presiding over the divine council," Yahweh is actually just "one of the assembled gods under a presiding El or Elyon."[334] It matters not, argues Parker, that throughout the Elohistic psalter or the psalms of Asaph, that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was considered to be presiding over the other deities, since each and every psalm must be understood as an independent literary unit. When this is done, a polytheistic division between El and one of his sons, Yahweh, becomes apparent in Psalm 82.[335]

Parker supports his conclusion with linguistic arguments drawn from the connotations of two key verbs in the first verse, נצב (*nṣb*; stand") and שׁפט (*špṭ*; "judge"). He declares:

> Are these the actions of a presiding officer, or of a member of a court? At first sight of the root *špṭ* (v. 1) many have leapt to the conclusion that the speaker is acting as judge. But the root *špṭ* has a variety of meanings; indeed each of its four occurrences in this psalm bears a different meaning. Its specific sense in v. 1 is defined by the speech which the word introduces. This consists of a rebuke . . . it calls upon the members of the assembly not to pervert justice by

---

[333] Ibid., 48.
[334] Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 533-534.
[335] Ibid., 534-535.

favoring malefactors. . . . Understanding the speech as a charge, rebuke, or accusation, we must assign the occurrence of *šp̣t* in v. 1 the specific meaning: 'to charge with, accuse of, injustice' (or, put positively, 'to call for justice'). *Šp̣t* neither states nor implies that the speaker is presiding over the gods, only that he is accusing the gods.[336]

In conjunction with this distinction between accusing versus presiding, Parker notes that, in legal contexts "the judge sits while the parties to a dispute – and specifically the plaintiff – stand."[337] Citing several verses which illustrate the judge in seated position, Parker concludes that:

> In the divine assembly in particular, the language used of the members who attend – as distinct from the presiding deity – refers to standing: *htyṣb* in Job 1:6; 2:1; *ʿmd* in 1 Kings 22:19,21 (where Yahweh is *yšb* 'sitting'). In Zechariah's vision of the divine assembly, Joshua the high priest and the prosecuting angel 'stand' (*ʿmd*) before Yahweh (or his representative *mlʾk*), along with all others present (*hʿmdym lpnyw*, 'those standing before him'; *hʿmdym hʾlh*, 'these standing around' [Zech 3:1,3,4,7]). In the Aramaic of Daniel, vast numbers of the divine council 'stand' before the presiding judge who 'sits' (*yṯb*; Dan 7:9-10). Even after the (judicial) court (*dynʾ*) 'sits' (Dan 7:10), the others present remain standing (*qʾmyʾ*, v. 16). . . . The weight of this evidence leads to the conclusion that the language of verse 1, together with the context of vv. 2-4, indicates that [Yahweh] is not here presiding over the divine assembly as judge, but rather stands among the gods to pronounce a charge of injustice. There is – tactfully – no direct reference to the president of the assembly. (On the other hand, all modern historians of West Semitic religion recognize within the designation of the divine assembly [*ʿdt-ʾl*, v. 1] and the pantheon [*bny ʿlywn*, v. 6] two terms for old high gods [El and Elyon]."[338]

In the view of Smith and Parker, then, Psalm 82 depicts the high god El presiding over an assembly of his sons. Yahweh, one of those sons, accuses the others of injustice. Several observations are necessary in response.

First, the view that El and Yahweh were separate deities in Israelite religion is disputed among scholars. Although it is widely understood on the basis of texts such as Exod 6:3 that Yahweh and El were at some point separate and then merged in Israelite religion, this merger could have been a combining of the high gods of two different religions. Hence their separation does not in itself demonstrate a father-son differentiation. A number of scholars also believe this merger was psychological; that is, Exod 6:3 does not refer to the combination of separate deities, but reflects a recognition that Yahweh and El were separates names for the same deity. Scholars such as F.M. Cross and J. C. de Moor have been the chief defenders of the view that identifies Yahweh as a title of El.[339] This issue is beyond the scope of this study, but its controversial nature deserves note.

---

336 Ibid., 535-536.
337 Ibid., 536.
338 Ibid., 537-538.
339 Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic,* 60-75; de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism*, 223-260, esp. 237-239. See also the general

Second, recalling the earlier comment by Smith that Psalm 82 is a clarion call for Yahweh "to assume a new role as judge of all the world" presupposes that the concept of Yahweh being the ruler of all the world was new and not part of pre-exilic Israelite religion. This assumption is integral to the view that the pre-exilic belief in a divine council vanished in response to a worldview where Yahweh became sovereign over the gods of the other nations during the crisis of the exile. As noted already in this study, this is not the case. In Chapter One it was pointed out that the assertion that Yahweh was only a national god prior to the exile runs contrary to the theme of Yahweh's kingship over the world, a prominent feature in enthronement psalms and early Israelite poetry that some scholars date between the 12th and 10th centuries B.C.E.[340] Ps 29:10, long noted for its divine council setting (cf. 29:1) declares succinctly that יְהוָה לַמַּבּוּל יָשָׁב וַיֵּשֶׁב יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָם. This description is especially noteworthy here since this early psalm has Yahweh "sitting (ישׁב) upon the flood," an image that, as noted in earlier, explicitly denotes presiding over the divine council in the meeting place of the council. Hence even in this early psalm Yahweh has already been identified with El and exercises sovereign rule as high God.[341] F. M. Cross's assertion with respect to this passage and Psalm 24 and Exod 15:18, two very early texts, is worth repeating: "The kingship of the gods is a common theme in early Mesopotamian and Canaanite epics. The common scholarly position that the concept of Yahweh as reigning or king is a relatively late development in Israelite thought seems untenable."[342]

Third, there is a coherence problem with Smith's statement that "Psalm 82, like Deut 32:8-9, preserves the outlines of the older theology it is rejecting." Why the editors would do this, but elsewhere leave no ambiguity as to the fusion of El and Yahweh in their redacted confessional statements of monotheism, points to the coherence problem alluded to in Chapter One. Not only were "polytheistic" elements of Israel's religion presumably missed in the editing of the final form of the text, but now it is argued that the redactors *deliberately* utilized the rejected polytheism to convince their audience that Yahweh is the lone god. This view does not account for exilic and post-exilic texts discussed subsequently in this chapter and the next which speak of other

---

summation of this view in K. van der Toorn, "Yahweh," *DDD,* 910-913.

[340] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic,* 90-93; Freedman, "Who is Like Thee Among the Gods?" 317.

[341] Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 36; Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds*, 370; Clifford, *Cosmic Mountain*, 98-160. See *KTU* 1.4.iv:20-24; 1.3.v:5-7; 1.6.i:32-34; 1.101:2; 1.3.iii:29.

[342] Cross and Freedman, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry*, 45, n. 59.

gods as though they exist without any rhetorical indication they are being rejected. Again, several of these texts are among the clearest examples of an Israelite pantheon whose linguistic elements are shared with wider Canaanite culture. One must ask why there is no scribal and rhetorical consistency, and how passages such as Job 1-2 convey the loss of divine plurality. This position also fails to account for divine vice regency in late canonical material, or how so many writers in the Second Temple period who speak of other אלוהים / (בני) אלים in language drawn from the Hebrew Bible could have missed the rhetoric of intolerant monotheism.

Logic aside, the most significant problem for Smith's and Parker's understanding of Psalm 82 comes from the text itself. Both these scholars distinguish Yahweh as the deity who "stands" in the divine council, bringing the accusation of his corrupt divine brethren before the seated El, head of the council.[343] The accusation uttered by Yahweh, the "plaintiff," in Ps 82:2-5 follows:

2 עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל וּפְנֵי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׂאוּ־סֶלָה׃ 3 שִׁפְטוּ־דַל וְיָתוֹם
עָנִי וָרָשׁ הַצְדִּיקוּ׃ 4 פַּלְּטוּ־דַל וְאֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצִּילוּ׃
5 לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ בַּחֲשֵׁכָה יִתְהַלָּכוּ יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ׃

These charges are immediately followed by the judicial sentencing, also considered by Smith and Parker to come from Yahweh:[344]

6 אֲנִי־אָמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֶלְיוֹן כֻּלְּכֶם׃
7 אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן וּכְאַחַד הַשָּׂרִים תִּפֹּלוּ׃

Neither Smith nor Parker offer any explanation as to why, in the scene they are creating, El the seated judge does not pronounce the sentence. In this reconstruction El apparently has no real function in the council. If one wants to press the courtroom metaphor, then the idea of the accuser also pronouncing sentence is both a violation of protocol and an overstepping of the role of accuser.

At this juncture, Smith notes that, "[A] prophetic voice emerges in verse 8, calling for God (now called *ʾĕlōhîm*) to assume the role of judge over all the earth. . . . Here Yahweh in effect is asked to assume the job of

---

343 Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48; Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 557.
344 Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48; Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 539-540.

all the gods to rule their nations in addition to Israel."[345] Parker concurs that after Yahweh announces the fate of the gods, "the psalmist then balances this with an appeal to Yahweh to assume the governance of the world."[346] Ps 82:8 reads:

קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ כִּי־אַתָּה תִנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם׃

The problem with this understanding of Ps 82:2-8 for those who separate Yahweh from El therein is, in Parker's words, "an appeal to Yahweh" to *rise up* (קומה) in 82:8. Yahweh is asked to *rise up* to act – to take control of the nations, which would mean in the context of the psalm's imagery that he had been heretofore seated. Given the imperative in 82:8, the text assumes that *Yahweh* is the one seated, and hence the one who presides over the council. This creates confusion, for if Yahweh is asked to rise from his throne to take action, who then was standing as accuser?

These problems arise from the fact that Smith and Parker have inserted a seated El in Psalm 82. The text (as well as other passages Parker cites) evinces no separation between El and Yahweh. Psalm 82 never includes any description of a seated deity. This notion has been supplied by virtue of the supposition that El and Yahweh were still conceived of separately at the psalm's composition or redaction. Yet earlier texts clearly affirm the contrary. As Psalm 24, Psalm 29, and Exod 15:3 inform us, Yahweh had long since been equated with El, the ruler of the council, by virtue of the imagery in those much older texts having been drawn from Ugaritic myths and applied to Yahweh. Additonally, the Dtr makes the equation explicit in 2 Sam 22:32: כִּי מִי־אֵל מִבַּלְעֲדֵי יְהוָה ("For who is El but Yahweh?"). It is difficult to see the Dtr as bonding the two deities together so forcefully as this only to have the writer of Psalm 82 build a novel rhetorical argument *for monotheism* by *disconnecting* the high God of the Israelite council into two gods. Yahweh certainly is the accuser, and as high God, is the only one with the authority to accuse the very gods he placed over the nations to govern them long ago as described in Deut 32:8-9, when He allotted the nations to the sons of God. Indeed, as noted below, the conception that the Hebrew Bible separates El and Yahweh is ultimately inferred from Deut 32:8-9.

[345] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48.

There are more coherent options for sorting out the characters in the judicial scene of Psalm 82. First, it is perhaps easiest to see Yahweh the council head and high God as exercising the authority only he has to accuse the royal sons who have become corrupt. Along with this sole authority to accuse comes the authority to pass sentence. Smith and Parker do have Yahweh passing sentence, but their imaginary courtroom reconstruction, vividly created for the reader, becomes a hindrance at this point, for one would expect El as seated judge to pass sentence, for this is the role of the judge. Yet the seated god has no role in their scene; he is utterly vestigial. His only function is apparently to prop up the El-Yahweh separation; otherwise he is useless. This confusion fades if one sees Yahweh alone, already identified with El, as both accuser and judge, which is precisely the conclusion of the major study on the prophetic lawsuit (ריב) pattern:

> If we are to undertake an investigation of the understanding of God which is presupposed by the prophetic lawsuit, we would do well to begin with a consideration of the roles Yahweh plays in the lawsuit. It would appear from our brief survey of recent research, as well as the textual analyses we have here performed, that it is characteristic of the prophetic lawsuit that Yahweh enjoys the dual role of prosecutor and judge. That Yahweh appears as prosecutor can be explained by the fact that it is he who has been wronged.[347]

What then of the imperative in 82:8?

In a study specifically focused on the "rising" of the deity from his throne to begin taking action, B. Batto notes that the imperative קומה alone was "standardized language for awakening God" and "stereotypical language" often found in "universal prayers for times of duress."[348] As scholars have noted, the context for Psalm 82 is certainly one of duress. The exiled members of Israel must come to grips with their situation as a defeated people.

Batto's article deals mainly with the anthropomorphism of rousing God from sleep, but also delves into how these stock phrases are used elsewhere. Particularly significant for the context of the issue under discussion is Batto's detection of the pervasiveness of the theme of the divine king resting in his temple palace and divine

---

[346] Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God," 546. The italics are mine.
[347] Kirsten Nielsen, *Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge: An Investigation of the Prophetic Lawsuit Rîb-Pattern* (trans. Frederick Cryer; JSOTSup 9; Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1978), 74.
[348] B. Batto, "The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty," *Bib* 68 (1987): 169.

mountain – the place where the divine council assembles.[349] For example, Mount Zion, located by the psalmist in the ירכתי צפון (48:1-2), was the eternal "resting place" of Yahweh in Ps 132:7-8, 13-14:[350]

7 נָבוֹאָה לְמִשְׁכְּנוֹתָיו נִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לַהֲדֹם רַגְלָיו׃
8 קוּמָה יְהוָה לִמְנוּחָתֶךָ אַתָּה וַאֲרוֹן עֻזֶּךָ׃

13 כִּי־בָחַר יְהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן אִוָּהּ לְמוֹשָׁב לוֹ׃
14 זֹאת־מְנוּחָתִי עֲדֵי־עַד פֹּה־אֵשֵׁב כִּי אִוִּתִיהָ׃

Even more important is Batto's observation that "the motif of the sleeping deity is used to express Israel's belief in Yahweh's absolute kingship."[351] Commenting on the occurrence of קומה and the other imperatives in Ps 44:24-27, he adds:

> "[T]his very conviction gives [Israel] the confidence to appeal for help. Yahweh's reign is supreme and he can be counted on to 'awaken' and *maintain* that right order which he decrees as creator and sovereign of all" (emphasis mine).[352]

Smith and Parker contend that Psalm 82 points to a time in Israel's religion when Yahweh was not considered to be the sovereign of all nations. The use of the stock imperative in 82:8, however, argues against this, given the overall backdrop of Batto's study. The seated god, Yahweh, is not asked to arise to begin a new, heretofore unimagined governance of the nations; he is beseeched to *maintain* the order he decreed in ancient times. He is not asked to assume a new role; he is expected to act because he already is the eternally supreme king. The burden of proof falls to Smith, Parker and other scholars to detect any expression in the Hebrew Bible that demonstrates Yahweh lacked jurisdiction over any part of the earth at any time in Israelite religion.[353]

Seeing Yahweh as the judge who presides over the council and who passes and carries out the sentence gives rise to a second option for discerning the characters in the scene of Psalm 82. It is perhaps possible to see the plaintiff not as Yahweh, but as an unidentified council member. The idea has precedent since this motif

---

[349] Ibid., 165-166.
[350] For commentary on some text-critical issues in this psalm, see Batto, "The Sleeping God," 266, n. 39.
[351] Batto, "The Sleeping God," 170.
[352] Ibid., 170. The emphasis is mine.
[353] There are some texts to which Mark S. Smith and Parker would no doubt point, such as Judg 11:24, 1 Sam 26:19-20, and 2 Kgs 3:27. Other scholars would firmly disagree, however, that these passages point to a denial of Yahweh's universal sovereignty, and have done so in other studies. For a brief summary, see Paul Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32,* 372-373.

occurs elsewhere in divine council contexts, such as Isaiah 40 (see verses 13-14).[354] I would suggest that what is needed to sort of the "legal proceedings" of Psalm 82 and other such passages that involve divine courtroom scenes is a grasp of the interchangeability of Yahweh and his vice-regent. The importance of this observation and emphasis will become apparent in Zech 3:1-7, but for now it is sufficient to introduce the possibility that this interchange may be the best solution to Psalm 82. While it is true that Yahweh could be both judge and plaintiff,[355] it may be the case that, although Yahweh is the One wronged and the One who will judge, his vice-regent may fulfill one of those roles as in the case of Zechariah 3.

[354] See Whybray, *The Heavenly Counsellor in Isaiah XL 13-14*.
[355] This possibility has a precedent of sorts on the earthly plain. In 1 Sam 22:6-19 king Saul acts as plaintiff and judge, and so the idea is not completely foreign to the composers and redactors of the Hebrew text.

3.4 *The Relationship of Deuteronomy 32:8-9 to Psalm 82*

Ultimately, the position of Parker and Smith regarding Psalm 82 depends on their understanding of whether El and Yahweh are separate deities in Deut 32:8-9, which most scholars see as pre-dating and influencing Psalm 82. Deut 32:8-9 reads:

8 בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם יַצֵּב גְּבֻלֹת עַמִּים
לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃
9 כִּי חֵלֶק יְהוָה עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ׃

The importance of Deut 32:8-9 (reading בני האלהים from the LXX and Qumran material instead of בני ישראל of MT in verse 8) for the view that Psalm 82 contains hints of an older polytheistic theology where El and Yahweh were separate deities is noted immediately by Smith:

> [This] divine arrangement of the world appears also in versions of Deuteronomy 32:8-9 preserved in Greek (LXX) and the Dead Sea Scrolls. . . . The texts of the LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls show Israelite polytheism which focuses on the central importance of Yahweh for Israel within the larger scheme of the world; yet this larger scheme provides a place for the other gods of the other nations in the world. Moreover, even if this text is mute about the god who presides over the divine assembly, it does maintain a place for such a god who is not Yahweh. Of course, later tradition would identify the figure of Elyon with Yahweh, just as many scholars have done. However, the title of Elyon ("Most High") seems to denote the figure of El, presider par excellence not only at Ugarit but also in Psalm 82.[356]

That the text of LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls is superior to MT in Deut 32:8-9 is not in dispute. I object to the notion that the title Elyon in verse 8 refers to El rather than to Yahweh in verse 9. There are several reasons why separating Yahweh and El here does not appear sound.

First, the form of Deuteronomy 32 argues against the idea that Yahweh is not the Most High in the passage. It has long been recognized that a form-critical analysis of Deuteronomy 32 demonstrates the predominance of the lawsuit, or ריב, pattern. As G. E. Wright noted in one such study, "the lawsuit pattern is the central form in Deuteronomy 32."[357] Building on the then recently published study of the divine council by H. Wheeler Robinson, Wright also noted that the dominant picture of the heavenly assembly was that it served as a court of law. Wright traces the elements of the lawsuit pattern through the passage, noting how the election

[356] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48-49.
[357] G. E. Wright, "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson; New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962), 43.

of Israel and the placement of each Gentile nation under the authority of a member of the heavenly court establish the setting of Deuteronomy 32. An indictment (32:15-18) is issued against Yahweh's elect people, Israel, who had abandoned their true Rock (32:5-6) and turned to the worship of the other gods who were under Yahweh's authority. The judge—Yahweh—then passes judgment (32:19-29).[358] The point is this: as with Psalm 82, the presupposition of the passage is that Yahweh is presiding over the lawsuit procedures and heavenly court. Only the high god has the authority to render a verdict, and that god is Yahweh. Deuteronomy 32 does not envision Yahweh as a subordinate, but as Most High in the council.

Second, the separation of El and Yahweh in Deut 32:8-9 in part depends on the decision to take the כי of 32:9 as adversative and denoting some contrast between Elyon of 32:8 and Yahweh of 32:9 ("However, Yahweh's portion is his people . . .").[359] Other scholars, however, consider the כי of 32:9 to be emphatic and translate, "And lo, Yahweh's portion is his people . . .").[360] Other scholars accept the adversative use but do not separate El and Yahweh in the passage.[361] Scholarship on this construction lacks consensus, and so conclusions based on the adversative syntactical choice are not secure.

Third, as noted in Chapter Two, Ugaritic scholars have noted that the title "Most High" (*ʿlyn* or the shorter *ʿl*) is never used of El in the Ugaritic corpus.[362] In point of fact it is Baal, a *second-tier deity*, who twice receives this title as the ruler of the gods.[363] The point here is to reject the argument that the mere occurrence of the term עליון must refer to El in Deut 32:8-9. Due to the well-established attribution of Baal epithets to Yahweh, the title עליון could conceivably point directly to Yahweh in Deut 32:8-9. It is also worth recalling Smith's argument that the 8th century prophetic condemnation of the goddess Asherah, indicating a rejection of her as Yahweh's wife, means that a Yahweh-El fusion had occurred by that time since Asherah was El's wife. Hence the author of Deuteronomy would have embraced a Yahweh-El fusion with Yahweh as the head of the

---

358 Ibid., 33-53.

359 For the arguments for an adversative כי, see Tsevat, "God and the Gods in Assembly," 132, n. 28, and J. Muilenburg, "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle כי in the Old Testament," *HUCA* 32 (1961): 140.

360 Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 303; Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12* (WBC 6B; Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002), 791 (n. 9a-a), 796; A. Schoors, "The Particle כי," OTS 21 (1981): 240-253.

361 Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 159-160, 363-374, esp. 373.

362 Korpel, *A Rift in the Clouds,* 276; Wyatt, "Titles of the Ugaritic Storm-God," 419; E.E. Elnes and Patrick D. Miller, "Elyon," in *DDD,* 294.

divine council. Indeed, what point would the Deuteronomic author have had in mind to bring back a Yahweh-El separation that had been rejected two hundred years prior? Further, what point would even later redactors have in mind by retreating to a long-discarded separation of El and Yahweh as they finalized the canonical text during the exile? Given the compositional and redactional history of Deuteronomy, it seems quite strained to argue that the text points to a separation of Yahweh and El.

Fourth, although "Elyon" is paired with El in the Hebrew Bible, it is most often an epithet of Yahweh.[364] Smith and Parker are of course well aware of this, but attribute it to "later tradition," contending that, in Deut 32:8-9 the title of Elyon should be associated with El distinct from Yahweh. This would be most curious if Yahweh and El had been fused as early as the eighth century, since Deuteronomy post-dates this time. It is interesting that other texts as early as the eighth century speak of Yahweh performing the same deeds as the עליון in Deut 32:8-9. For example, Isa 10:13 has Yahweh in control of the boundaries (גבולות) of the nations.[365] The anachronistic nature of the claim that Deuteronomy's author-redactors were separating El and Yahweh by their wording suggests that the argument stems from the misconception that the presence of בני־האלהים in this passage points to a polytheistic worldview. This is in fact what Smith asserts when he says, "the texts of the LXX and the Dead Sea Scrolls show Israelite polytheism."[366]

Again the tension in Smith's position is apparent. This conclusion requires him (and others) to argue that Deuteronomy 32 is a polytheistic relic deliberately allowed to remain in the text to somehow "set up" Psalm 82's exaltation of Yahweh. Such a view presumes that Israel's religion could not or did not qualitatively distinguish between the אלהים generally and Yahweh who had no species equal. Put in the form of a question, why would the presence of בני־האלהים require Yahweh and El to be separate, when a monolatrous religion with Yahweh-El as single high God can easily accommodate בני־האלהים? Deut 32:43 makes this question even more decisive, since that text (reading again with Qumran and LXX) demands that all the other gods worship Yahweh. Smith even concedes this point—that a divine council of בני־האלהים does not require polytheism—

---

[363] See *KTU* 1.16:iii.6, 8; Wyatt, "Ugaritic Storm-God," 419.
[364] E.E. Elnes and Patrick D. Miller, "Elyon," *DDD,* 296.
[365] J. Luyten, "Primeval and Eschatological Overtones in the Song of Moses (Dt 32, 1-43)," in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt,*

when he notes that "the divine assembly is not oppositional to monotheistic statements in biblical literature."[367] References to בני־האלהים do not argue for a religious worldview prior to the Yahweh-El fusion due to the fact that בני־האלהים persist well after that fusion in the Hebrew Bible, not to mention well into the Second Temple period. There is a logical disconnect in the separation argument along with the chronological impediment.

Fifth, separating El from Yahweh in Deut 32:8-9 is internally inconsistent, both within Deuteronomy 32 and Deuteronomy at large. This assertion is demonstrated by the two preceding verses, Deut 32:6-7. Those two verses attribute no less than five well-recognized El epithets to Yahweh, demonstrating that the those who fashioned Deuteronomy recognized the union of El with Yahweh, as one would expect at this point in Israel's religion:[368]

6 הֲ־לַיְהוָה תִּגְמְלוּ־זֹאת עַם נָבָל וְלֹא חָכָם הֲלוֹא־הוּא אָבִיךָ קָּנֶךָ
הוּא עָשְׂךָ וַיְכֹנְנֶךָ׃ 7 זְכֹר יְמוֹת עוֹלָם בִּינוּ שְׁנוֹת דּוֹר־וָדוֹר
שְׁאַל אָבִיךָ וְיַגֵּדְךָ זְקֵנֶיךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ לָךְ׃

These verses clearly contain elements drawn from ancient descriptions of El and attribute them to Yahweh (הֲ־לַיְהוָה תִּגְמְלוּ־זֹאת). At Ugarit El is called *ʾab ʾadm* ("father of mankind")[369] and *ṯr ʾil ʾabh ʾil mlk dyknnh* ("Bull El his father, El the king who establishes him").[370] In like manner, Yahweh is described as "your father" (אָבִיךָ) who "established you" (וַיְכֹנְנֶךָ). Yahweh is also the one who "creates" (קָּנֶךָ) in verse six. The root **qny* is found in the Palmyrene El epithet *ʾl qny ʾrṣ* ("El, creator of the earth")[371] and the Karatepe inscription's appeal to *ʾl qn ʾrṣ* ("El, creator of the earth").[372] At Ugarit the verb occurs in the El epithet, *qny wʾadn ʾilm* ("creator and lord of the gods"),[373] and Baal calls El *qnyn* ("our creator").[374] Gen

und Botschaft (ed. Norbert Lohfink; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1985), 342.
366 Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 48.
367 Ibid., 51.
368 Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32,* 360-361.
369 *KTU* 1.14:1.37, 43.
370 *KTU* 1.3:v.35-36; 1.4:i.4-6; iv.47-48.
371 Marjo Christina Annette Korpel, "Creator of All," *DDD,* 208.
372 H. Donner and W. Rollig, *KAI* (4th ed.; Band 1; Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1979). The text cited is *KAI* 26.III.18-19.
373 *KTU* 1.3:v.9.

14:19,22 likewise attributes this title to El. Deut 32:7 references the "days of old" (יְמוֹת עוֹלָם) and "the years of many generations" (שְׁנוֹת דּוֹר־וָדוֹר) which correspond, respectively, to El's description (*ʿlm*)[375] and title *ʾab šnm* ("father of years") at Ugarit.[376]

Since Smith believes the LXX / Qumran text of Deut 32:8-9 separates El-Elyon and Yahweh into Father and Son because of the בני־האלהים element of the verses, he is therefore forced to the conclusion that verses 8-9 simultaneously distinguish Elyon and Yahweh while verses 6-7 unite them. Those who crafted the text of Deuteronomy 32 would have either expressed diametrically oppositional views of Yahweh's status in consecutive verses, or have allowed a presumed original separation of Yahweh and El to stand in the text while adding verses 6-7 in which the names describe a single deity. It is difficult to believe that the scribes were this careless or unskilled. If they were at all motivated by an intolerant monotheism one would expect this potential confusion to have been removed. If, as Smith himself concludes, Yahweh and El had been fused in Israelite religion by the eighth century B.C.E., why would those in religious power centuries later allow a presumed allusion to a Yahweh and El separation to remain in the text?[377] It is more coherent to argue that Israelite religion, even at the late stage of the redaction of Deuteronomy, practiced the monolatrous worship of the single high God Yahweh-El who presided over an assembly of בני־האלהים. Belief in בני־האלהים does not necessitate a Yahweh-El separation. Even those who hold to the dominant paradigm of the rise of Israelite monotheism would acknowledge that the belief in a council of such beings lasted well beyond the eighth century B.C.E.

In Deuteronomy at large, the same internal inconsistencies are manifest. In Deut 4:19-20, a parallel passage to 32:8-9, the text informs us that it was Yahweh who "took" (לקח) Israel as his own inheritance (cf. Deut 9:26, 29; 29:25). Neither the verb form nor the idea is passive. Israel was not given to Yahweh, which is the picture that scholars who separate El and Yahweh in Deuteronomy 32 want to fashion. Deut 32:9 is a verbless clause, and evinces no grammatical reason to conclude that Israel was given to Yahweh by his superior,

---

[374] *KTU* 1.10:iii.5.
[375] M. Dahood, *Ras Shamra Parallels* (ed. L.R. Fisher; vol. I of AnOr 49; Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1972), 294-295.
[376] *Ugaritica* V.1.15-23.

El. In view of the close relationship of Deut 32:8-9 to Deut 4:19-20, it is more consistent to have Yahweh taking Israel for his own terrestrial allotment by sovereign act. Deuteronomy 32 also contains the Tetragrammaton eight times, along with three other divine names apart from עליון: אלהים (v. 8), אל (v. 18b), and אלוה (v. 15c). We are certainly not to conclude these are separate gods. In light of the presence of these well-known epithets and alternative names for Yahweh, it is reasonable to interpret עליון in a similar way, particularly in the context of the El epithets attributed to Yahweh in 32:6-7.

The religious worldview of the exilic redactors was unthreatened by the בני־האלהים in these verses. The scribes were not attempting to weed out polytheistic elements or use such elements to prop up a new religious innovation. Yahweh was the incomparable king of all nations in this early biblical text and had been viewed as such since the ancient fusion of Yahweh and El.

3.5 *Summation*

The textual phenomena of Deuteronomy 32 leaves the interpreter with one of two options: the prevailing view, that these rather obvious references to other divine beings were overlooked by exilic redactors trying to enforce an intolerant monotheism, or that the Dtr redactors had a monolatrous worldview that included other gods. I contend that the latter is more coherent. This choice leads to the conclusion that the presence of other "deity class" members of the divine council in Deuteronomy 32 has no evidentiary value for arguing: (1) that this chapter and Psalm 82 are just rhetoric for persuading Israelites that Yahweh was finally king over all the gods; or (2) that later Second Temple period references to plural (בני) אלים / אלהים speak of a lower class of heavenly beings than the pre-exilic gods of the divine council. In point of fact, this worldview and its monolatry is consistent throughout Deuteronomy and later post-exilic literature, as the next two chapters demonstrate.

---

[377] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 49.

Chapter Four

The Divine Council and Monolatry in Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah

This study's earlier discussion on the definitions of monotheism and monolatry noted Mark S. Smith's distinction between the two concepts. Smith's concise summary is worth repeating here: "Monotheistic exclusivity is not simply a matter of cultic observance, as in the First Commandment's prohibition against 'no other gods before me' in Exod 20:3 and Deut 5:7. It extends further to an understanding of deities in the cosmos (no other gods, period). . . . Statements of incomparability are not included; such hyperbole is known also in Mesopotamian texts."[378] This study agrees with Smith's assertion that statements of incomparability are not to be understood as monotheism.

In his important monograph on the subject of Yahweh's incomparability, C.J. Labuschagne noted several examples from the Mesopotamian texts to which Smith alludes. For instance Marduk is called "Mighty god, who has no equal among the great gods."[379] Anu's Sumerian personal name, *Ana-da-nu-me-a* ("there is none besides Anu") also expresses incomparability.[380] Labuschagne elaborates:

> The concept of the incomparability of Yahweh is of greatest importance for a more profound understanding of the Hebrew knowledge of God. In a most surprising way it sheds light on those qualities of Yahweh that distinguish Him from other gods . . . [and] at the same time it helps to explain why Israel called itself incomparable among the nations. . . . When Israel was called a גוי אחד in II Samuel 7:23, it means that in view of Israel's part in the history of salvation, she was lone in the world, for to the exclusion of all other nations she was the people saved by Yahweh. Therefore, like her God, she was regarded as the single one amongst others. . . . When Israel compared its God with other gods, it certainly assumed that there were gods in the polytheistic world, and it took their existence for granted. . . . The fact that Israel *did as a matter of fact compare its God with other gods* confirms that they took the existence of other gods seriously.[381]

---

378 Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 151, 279, n. 20.
379 Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament*, 40.
380 Ibid., 43.
381 Ibid., 134, 138 (emphasis is the author's). While Labuschagne's work is helpful in elucidating the concept of Yahweh's incomparability, his understanding (and rejection) of a divine council *en toto* (cf. p. 137) is unfounded and misguided. For some reason, Labuschagne strains to explain that the other gods to whom Yahweh is compared do not form a council, but are Yahweh's retinue (pp. 81-85). He fails to articulate the difference, and does not deal with the terminology for council. Likewise he asserts that the concept of a council would undermine incomparability (pp. 137-138). Why Yahweh is incomparable among a "retinue" but not a council is never explained. It would seem Ps 89:7-8 [Hebrew] settles the issue decisively against Labuschagne's view: "For who in the skies can be

Commenting on the *Shema* Labuschagne adds:

> [H]ere we have the comparison of Yahweh with other gods carried to its logical conclusion. He is incomparable and therefore he is the Single One amongst the gods, the Solitary One, without peer, to whom no god is related, with whom no god can be on the same level. . . . We may conclude that the exclusiveness of the confession, יהוה אחד, is not the result of monotheistic thought, but the result of Moses' work, as well as Israel's experience in history that Yahweh is incomparable. . . . When Israel, therefore, confesses in the *Shema* that Yahweh, '*our* God', is the Single One, she expresses at the same time that she owes undivided loyalty to Him alone, for He is the only One for her. The qualification of Yahweh as *'our God'* in the confession is indispensable, for it witnesses the very personal relation between Israel and Yahweh.[382]

The goal of this chapter is to demonstrate that the primary evidence for an intolerant monotheism in the Hebrew Bible is at best inconclusive, and very likely speaks only to the continuity of the monolatrous pre-exilic worldview that embraced a divine council. The evidence offered by those who insist Israelite religion achieved monotheism with the exilic and post-exilic redaction of Deuteronomy and the composition of Deutero-Isaiah should instead be understood as articulating the incomparability of Yahweh. Toward this goal, this chapter raises the issue of the simultaneous presence of affirmations of other gods and claims that “besides (Yahweh), there are no other gods” in Deuteronomy. The discussion then moves to Deutero-Isaiah, where the same phrases occur.

4.1 *Deuteronomy: Monotheism or Monolatry?*

Earlier in this study the divine plurality and inter-relationship of Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9 were briefly discussed. We now return to those passages as backdrop for the issues at hand. In Deut 4:19-20 and Deut 32:8-9 one reads:

19 וּפֶן־תִּשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְרָאִיתָ אֶת־הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶת־הַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶת־הַכּוֹכָבִים
כֹּל צְבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנִדַּחְתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם וַעֲבַדְתָּם אֲשֶׁר חָלַק יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
אֹתָם לְכֹל הָעַמִּים תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמָיִם׃ 20 וְאֶתְכֶם לָקַח יְהוָה וַיּוֹצִא אֶתְכֶם
מִכּוּר הַבַּרְזֶל מִמִּצְרָיִם לִהְיוֹת לוֹ לְעַם נַחֲלָה כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃

---

compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and terrible above all that are round about him?" Yahweh is incomparable in the council, and there is no need for a forced distinction between “council” and “retinue.”

382 Labuschagne, *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament*, 138, 141. On incomparability as relating to the rhetoric of Deutero-Isaiah, see Walter Strolz, “The Unique One: The Uniqueness of God According to Deutero-Isaiah,” in *Standing Before God: Studies on Prayer in Scriptures and in Tradition with Essays in Honor of John M. Oesterreicher* (New York: Ktav, 1981), 257-266.

19 And when you look up to the heavens and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them and serving them. These Yahweh your God has allotted to the other peoples everywhere under the heaven. 20 But the Lord has taken you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be to him a people of inheritance, as you are this day.

Deut 32:8-9

8 בְּהַנְחֵל עֶלְיוֹן גּוֹיִם בְּהַפְרִידוֹ בְּנֵי אָדָם יַצֵּב גְּבֻלֹת עַמִּים
לְמִסְפַּר בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃
9 כִּי חֵלֶק יְהוָה עַמּוֹ יַעֲקֹב חֶבֶל נַחֲלָתוֹ׃

Deut 32: (8) When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. (9) Lo, the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.

Deut 32:8a reads בהנחל עליון גוים. The object of the infinitive absolute[383] is גוים. As Sanders notes, the Hiphil of the verb נחל can be "connected both with an *accusativus personae* (the inheriting person; hence, "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance") or with an *accusativus rei* (the object inherited by this person; and so rendering, "When the Most High gave the nations as an inheritance").[384] Both options are syntactically possible, but which should be preferred?

The answer is to be found in Deut 32:9: "Lo, the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance" (NIV). Since verse nine clearly presents the nation Jacob/Israel as *being taken* as an allotted (חלק) inheritance (נחלה - note the wordplay on both counts with the Hiphil verb in verse 8) by a divine personage (Yahweh), the parallelism of MT's verse nine would require "nations" be given as an inheritance to the sons of God by the Most High.

But while the nations are given as an inheritance in Deut 32:8-9, in Deut 4:19-20 a complementary perspective is taken. In 4:19-20 the sun, moon, and stars are considered living beings created by Yahweh,[385] and these deities are allotted to the nations:

383 בְּהַנְחֵל is a pointed as a Hiphil infinitive absolute, but should probably be understood as a defective spelling of the infinitive construct: בְּהַנְחִל (Sanders, *Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 154). This is a minor consideration, for the real point is the relationship of the object "nations" with the Hiphil verb.

384 Sanders, *Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 154. See Deut 1:38; 3:28; 21:16; 31:7; Josh 1:6; 1 Sam 2:8; Zech 8:12; and Prov 8:21 for other examples.

385 For Yahweh's creation of the heavenly host, see Isa 40:25-26; 45:12; Hos 13:4 (LXX); Pss 33:6; 148:1-5; Neh 9:6.

חָלַק יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֹתָם לְכֹל הָעַמִּים תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמָיִם. Deut 29:25 (Hebrew) informs us that the peoples of these nations may worship these gods, since Yahweh allotted them:

> וַיֵּלְכוּ וַיַּעַבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יְדָעוּם וְלֹא חָלַק לָהֶם׃
> For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods that they did not know, that he had not allotted to them.

The effect of the complementary perspective is derisive. The other nations worship creatures, not the creator. The gods that Israel's fathers "knew not" are called devils (שדים) in Deut 32:16-17 and impotent in 32:37-39. This enslavement to feckless gods came about as the result of the disobedience at Babel (cf. Deut 32:8 and the division of nations). After Yahweh's decision to set aside the nations, he created Israel anew to be his own allotment. The nations and their gods deserve each other.

Many scholars who do recognize the affirmation of divine plurality in Deuteronomy would argue that the succeeding redaction of Deuteronomy has recast the older monolatry in a truly monotheistic framework, pointing to Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:39 as proof, since they declare that "there is none else beside Yahweh." In other words, whatever the *Shema* and Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9 meant on their own terms has been subsumed by the monotheistic framework into which they were placed by the later redactor. Adherents of this interpretive perspective appeal to Deutero-Isaiah for support, where the same phrases and others are found. Since Deutero-Isaiah is considered the premier example of exclusivistic monotheism,[386] the correlation of these phrases allegedly proves Deuteronomy's references to other gods must be interpreted from the perspective of exclusivistic monotheism.

This explanation assumes that "none else beside" constitutes a denial of existence. The only way to demonstrate that Deuteronomy's affirmation that the other gods were allotted to the nations by Yahweh himself has been "recast" by the hand of an intolerant monotheist would be to discern unambiguously that these gods were in fact imaginary and non-existent. This case depends upon whether the relevant phrases in Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:12, 39 in fact deny the existence of other gods.

Deut 4:35

אַתָּה הָרְאֵתָ לָדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים אֵין עוֹד מִלְבַדּוֹ׃

---

[386] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 154-155.

You were shown these things so that you might know that the LORD, he is *the* God (הוא האלהים); besides him there is no other.

Deut 4:39

וְיָדַעְתָּ הַיּוֹם וַהֲשֵׁבֹתָ אֶל־לְבָבֶךָ כִּי יְהוָה הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל
וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתָּחַת אֵין עוֹד׃

Know therefore this day, and lay it to your heart, that Yahweh, he is *the* God (הוא האלהים) in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.

Deut 32:12

יְהוָה בָּדָד יַנְחֶנּוּ וְאֵין עִמּוֹ אֵל נֵכָר׃

The LORD alone did lead him, and there was no foreign god with him.

Deut 32:39

רְאוּ עַתָּה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי
אֲנִי אָמִית וַאֲחַיֶּה מָחַצְתִּי וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל׃

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

With respect to Deut 4:35, 39, יהוה הוא האלהים is a simple verbless clause with the pronoun emphasizing the subject, but what does it mean that Yahweh is האלהים? Is this a denial of the existence of other gods? The answer can be found in another Dtr passage, 1 Kgs 18:21, where Elijah challenges the crowd at Carmel, "If Yahweh is האלהים, follow him, but if Baal, then follow him." Clearly Yahweh's status as האלהים does not mean that Baal does not exist—only that Yahweh is superior to Baal. Yahweh is *the* God par excellence, or, as Deut 10:17 states, Yahweh is אלהי האלהים, "God of the gods." To call Yahweh האלהים is to call him unique, not to deny the existence of other gods.

The second half of the statements of Deut 4:35,39 states אין עוד (מלבדו). The phrase is usually translated, "there is no other (beside him)," and is taken by many scholars to be a denial of the existence of all other gods except Yahweh. There are a number of difficulties with this understanding. As Nathan McDonald notes in his recent work *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism,'* the only consideration of the negative particle אין followed by the adverb עוד with or without the subsequent preposition of excluding sense

(מלבדו) is that of H. Rechenmacher.[387] The first part of Rechenmacher's study was a linguistic analysis of Hebrew verbless sentences with particles of negation. This first part is concluded by an examination of prepositions and adverbs with an excluding sense, including those found in the verses from Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah under consideration.[388] Rechenmacher argues that the examples in Deuteronomy 4 point to exclusivistic monotheism. However, McDonald points to several methodological problems with Rechenmacher's study.[389]

First, the above constructions are used in reference to Babylon and Moab in Isa 47:8, 10 and Zeph 2:15. In these instances, these constructions cannot constitute the denial of the existence of other cities and nations.[390] Rechenmacher comments only that these uses are "naturally relative," but he fails to consider that possibility with the verses referring to Yahweh and other gods. Second, McDonald notes, "Rechenmacher assumes, without argument, that עוד is exchangeable for a preposition with excluding function and personal suffix."[391] However, on two occasions in Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah (Deut 4:35; Isa 45:21) "אין עוד occurs with an excluding prepositional construction . . . and such an exchange would create a tautologous expression."[392] Third, as McDonald and other scholars have noted, neither the usual temporal sense of adverbial עוד ("still, yet") nor the conjunctive sense ("additionally, also, again") fit Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:39. If one accepts the list provided in BDB for those texts where עוד does not have either of these meanings, one is left with seven occurrences of the adverb, all of which occur in questions or answers to questions. McDonald notes that "in each case, what is being questioned is not the absolute existence of an object, but only if there is an object in a

---

[387] H. Rechenmacher, *"Außer mir gibt es keinen Gott!" Eine sprach- und literaturwissenschaftliche Studie zur Ausschließlichkeitsformel* (ATSAT 49; St. Ottilien, 1997).
[388] Ibid., 97-114, cited in McDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 82.
[389] McDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 83.
[390] One could also include 1 Kgs 18:1-6 in this discussion. The passage deals with the end of the three-year drought and famine during the career of Elijah. After meeting with Elijah, Ahab calls Obadiah, the steward of his house, and together they decided upon a course of action to find grass to save their remaining horses and mules. After deciding between themselves which districts of the land to search (v. 6a), the text says אַחְאָב הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶחָד לְבַדּוֹ וְעֹבַדְיָהוּ הָלַךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ־אֶחָד לְבַדּוֹ ("Ahab went one way by himself [לְבַדּוֹ], and Obadiah went another way by himself [לְבַדּוֹ]"). While it may be possible (but strained) to suggest that Obadiah literally went through the land completely unaccompanied in his search, it is preposterous to say that the king of Israel went completely alone—without bodyguards or servants—to look for grass. The point is that לְבַדּוֹ (and by extension מלבדו) need not refer to complete isolation or solitary presence.
[391] McDonald, *Deuteronomy*, 83.
[392] Ibid.

person’s immediate domain. . . . In each of the questions what is being asked is whether the one being questioned has an additional [item or] member besides the ones already taken into account.”[393]

The question for our purposes is, does עוד function in the same way in the phrase אין עוד and the similar phrase אפס עוד? The instances where the subjects are not divine are instructive. In Isa 47:8, 10 Babylon says to herself, אני ואפסי עוד (“I am, and there is none else beside me”). The claim is not that she is the only city in the world but that she has no rival. Nineveh makes the identical claim in Zeph 2:15 (אני ואפסי עוד). Similarly, where the subject is divine it can coherently be argued that the point of אין עוד is not to deny the existence of other gods, but to affirm that Yahweh is unique and the only god for Israel. This fits well with the wording of the *Shema* and the first commandment, where the confession and command imply the existence of other gods.

Deut 32:12

יְהוָה בָּדָד יַנְחֶנּוּ וְאֵין עִמּוֹ אֵל נֵכָר׃

The LORD alone did lead him, and there was no foreign god with him.

Deut 32:39

רְאוּ עַתָּה כִּי אֲנִי אֲנִי הוּא וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי
אֲנִי אָמִית וַאֲחַיֶּה מָחַצְתִּי וַאֲנִי אֶרְפָּא וְאֵין מִיָּדִי מַצִּיל׃

See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god beside me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

Moving on to Deut 32:12, 39, the two key phrases are אני אני הוא followed by ואין אלהים עמדי. It is important to observe that the repetition of אני (or אנכי) and the clause אני הוא occurs ten times in Deutero-Isaiah.[394] In agreement with Muraoka, who rejects אני אני הוא as a tripartite verbless clause, categorizing it instead as bipartite with repeated element that functions emphatically, what does it mean for Yahweh to declare, “I, even I, am he”? Citing C. H. Williams’s monograph on the meaning of this phrase,[395] McDonald summarizes the problems with understanding the phrase as a statement of self-existence or divine interchangeability (“translating, ‘I am the same’) before agreeing that this phrase and similar phrasings in Deutero-Isaiah amount

[393] Ibid., 84.

[394] Isa 41:4; 43:10, 11, 13; 46:4; 48:12, 15; 52:6. They occur together in Isa 43:25 and 51:12.

to the claim that Yahweh is unique and the only truly powerful God who can deliver Israel. As with similar older treatments of pre-exilic Yahwism, this means only that Yahweh is incomparable and the other gods are powerless in comparison.

The second line of Deut 32:39, ואין אלהים עמדי, can either be understood as "there is no God like me," which would not be a denial of the other gods' existence, or "there is no god with me." The latter would parallel Deut 32:12's phrase, ואין עמו אל נכר ("there was no foreign god with him"). These phrases do not amount to a denial of the existence of other gods.

In the case of Deut 32:12, the notion that, "[T]he LORD alone (יהוה בדד) did lead him, and there was no foreign god with him," cannot be accurately construed as a denial of the existence of other gods. In one Ugaritic text with parallel language Baal says: *ʾaḥdy d ymlk ʿl ʾilm* ("I alone am the one who can be king over the gods").[396] This is certainly no statement for exclusivistic monotheism at Ugarit, but points to incomparability. Deut 32:12 simply states that when Yahweh executed judgment, no other god assisted him or stood in his way. P. Sanders makes the same point in his monograph on Deut 32 when he states, "In colon 12aB the existence of other gods is not under discussion. The colon just says that YHWH was the only god who made an effort for Israel."[397]

With respect to Deut 32:39 Sanders adds, "On the basis of this colon alone it is difficult to decide if it is a claim for the absoluteness of Yahweh (i.e., the existence of other gods is denied), or the incomparability of Yahweh."[398] The solution seems to lie in balancing the colon ואין אלהים עמדי ("there is no god besides me") with the phrase ואין מידי מציל ("there is none that can deliver out of my hand"). As Sanders notes:

> How do we translate עמדי? Theoretically 'with', 'beside', and 'like' are our options. In other parts of the song the existence of other gods is not denied but they are regarded as powerless; cf. v. 31, 37-38, 43a (4QDt^{q}). This circumstance seems to render the translation 'with' less convincing. It is the incomparability [of God] . . . that is confessed here. The phrase ואין אלהים עמדי must have virtually the same meaning as the far more common expression of YHWH's incomparability by the phrase . . . אין כ. The possibility of translating עם by 'like' is also suggested by some Ugaritic evidence. . . . In *KTU* 1.6:i.44-45 Ilu and Athiratu are

---

395 C. H. Williams, *I am He: The Interpretation of ʾAni Hūʾ in Jewish and Early Christian Literature* (WUNT II, 113, 2000) 39-52.
396 *KTU* 1.4.vii.49-52.
397 Sanders, *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 238.
398 Ibid., 226.

comparing various candidates for Baʿalu's succession. Ilu rejects one of them, stating: *dq ʾanm l yrẓ ʿm bʿl l yʿdb mrḥ ʿm bn dgn ktmsm* ("One of feeble strength cannot run like Baʿalu, one who knuckles down cannot poise the lance like the son of Daganu"; lines 50-52). Since at this moment Baʿalu is not among the living anymore, the translation 'with' is obviously unacceptable here. It has long been perceived that 'like' is the preferable translation.[399]

The point above regarding the relationship between Yahweh's incomparability and his *uniqueness* is an important one. The fact that there is no deity who can save those whom Yahweh has targeted for judgment speaks to both aspects. This uniqueness in turn compels the confession that Yahweh alone is the "true" God (Jer 10:10). This is the basis for Israel's monolatry. As one scholar recently noted in a work on the question of monotheism in Deuteronomy:

> [T]he belief in one God is the central issue in the theology of Deuteronomy. In later times, the monotheistic statements of Deuteronomy (esp. 4:35, 39; 6:4; 7:9; 32:39) are used by the monotheistic religions of Late Antiquity, Judaism and Christianity, to support their argument against those who did not believe in one God. . . . As far as the belief in one God is concerned, Deuteronomy is not concerned with a theoretical monotheism, but rather gives a confession of faith. The monotheism of Deuteronomy emerged from the struggle against *idolatry*. Moreover, the decline of Israel is attributed to the following of other gods. *The existence of other gods is not denied, however, only their power and significance for Israel*.[400]

The absence of any unmistakable denial of the existence of other gods in Deuteronomy and the Dtr literature is also bolstered by a study of the concept of alien deities in that material by Yair Hoffman.[401] Hoffman studied the occurrence and distribution of the phrases אלוהי נכר, אל זר, and אלהים אחרים to discern whether Israel's faith reflected an exclusivistic monotheism, or if such phrases denoted only a difference in perspective ("they are *other* gods since they are not *ours*").[402]

Based on the infrequent number of occurrences and their distribution, Hoffman concluded the first two phrases could not decisively answer the question. The third phrase, the most relevant to the study, resulted in more clarity. By way of summation, Hoffman found that the phrase אלהים אחרים:

---

[399] Ibid., 238; cf. note 788. On the Ugaritic evidence, see also Johannes C. de Moor, *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Baʿalu According to the Version of Ilimilku* (AOAT 16; Kevelaer & Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971), 203.

[400] J. T. A. M. van Ruiten, "The Use of Deuteronomy 32:39 in Monotheistic Controversies in Rabbinic Literature," in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honor of C.J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 223 (emphasis mine).

[401] Yair Hoffman, "The Concept of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature," in *Politics and Theopolitics in the Bible and Postbiblical Literature* (ed. Henning Graf Reventlow, Yair Hoffman, and Benjamin Uffenheimer; JSOTSup 171; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 1994), 66-84.

[402] Ibid., 71. Emphasis is the author's.

> [S]eems to testify that at least among those who used the phrase a certain concept of otherness relating to deity prevailed. . . . אלהים אחרים is certainly an idiomatic phrase, and its distribution proves it to be a Deuteronomistic one: it occurs 59 times (95%) in Dtr and only four times in non-Dtr texts . . . [its] frequent usage indicates that it gained the lexical status of a common term.[403]

Anticipating the critical response that the study of the phrase could still not shed sufficient light on his questions since the Hebrew Bible lacks sophisticated philosophical vocabulary, Hoffman writes:

> Such an argument loses its validity at least in verses in which אלהים אחרים is qualified by clauses such as "which you knew not" and "which neither you nor your parents knew." Such a clause indicates that since the Dtr felt that the vagueness of אלהים אחרים prevented him from achieving more accuracy, he found a way of making the phrase less equivocal.[404]

Hoffman's conclusions support the position that the denunciations of other gods in Deuteronomy and the Dtr literature were based on Yahweh's superiority to other gods, not his lone existence:

> The qualifying phrase אשׁר לא ידעת verifies that by the phrase אלהים אחרים Dtr did not intend a conclusive denial of deities other than Yahweh. . . . I suggest that the creation of the expression אלהים אחרים reflects Dtr's vague feeling that a term was needed which could express the dichotomy, though not absolute contradistinction, between Yahweh and all other gods. . . . The creation of a term was vital for the Dtr who wanted to contrast other deities with Yahweh not on the level of existence, but on the level of potency.[405]

By way of illustration outside the book of Deuteronomy, Hoffman offers a passage from the Dtr prophet Jeremiah (Jer 2:13), "who juxtaposed Yahweh and other deities using the metaphor of the fountain and the cistern: 'My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.'"[406] Jeremiah's rhetoric in 2:11a ("Has a nation ever changed its gods? [Yet they are not gods at all]") does not overturn the comparison based on potency with a denial of the existence of the other gods, for 2:11b explains, "But my people have exchanged their Glory for what does not profit." The point of Jeremiah's comparison is potency, not existence. Hoffman again comments:

> Thus the concept of "other gods" expressed by the term אלהים אחרים is that they exist, they may even be "helpful" for their natural worshippers, but not for Israel, which can be helped only by Yahweh. Such a concept of other gods leads indirectly to the belief that Yahweh is mightier than the other gods, and therefore it is not only immoral but stupid for Israel to transgress his covenant. The concept of the sovereignty of Yahweh over all deities, though not his exclusiveness, and the idea that it is legitimate for each nation to worship its own gods, are well

---

[403] Ibid.
[404] Ibid.
[405] Ibid., 72.
[406] Ibid., 72.

attested in Deut 4:19-20. Here Israel is warned not to worship the sun, the moon, and the stars, "whom the Lord has allotted (חלק) unto all nations under the whole world."

The confessional statements of Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:12, 39 must be viewed against the backdrop of the Most High's dealings with the Gentile nations and the gods he appointed to govern them. It would be nonsensical to conclude that Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9 have Yahweh giving the nations up to the governance of non-existent beings. The writer-redactor's own text is not suggesting in turn that Yahweh allotted non-existent beings to the nations so as to explain why the nations outside Israel worship non-existent beings. The religious outlook of the writer of Deuteronomy was not exclusivistic monotheism but monolatry based on Yahweh's incomparability and his choice of Israel. The theology of Deuteronomy and the Deuteronimist logically called for Israel's exclusive worship of Yahweh, the rejection of the worship of other gods, and the removal of rival cult centers, not because the idea that other gods existed was threatening, but because loyalty to any other god was such an abominable response to Yahweh's choice of Israel.

Immediately preceding the confession of 4:35 the reader sees the linkage between election of Israel as Yahweh's inheritance with his uniqueness. What other god was so powerful as to snatch his own possession from the feckless gods that held sway over the other nations, namely mighty Egypt?

> 34 אוֹ הֲנִסָּה אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לָקַחַת לוֹ גוֹי מִקֶּרֶב גּוֹי בְּמַסֹּת בְּאֹתֹת
> וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבְיָד חֲזָקָה וּבִזְרוֹעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים
> כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה לָכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ׃
>
> Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by tests, by miraculous signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things Yahweh your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?

Commenting on this relationship and its place in the Dtr's argumentation in Deuteronomy 4, A. Rofé states:

> If the Lord 'invaded' Egypt and took for himself from there the Israelite people thus revealing his supreme and sovereign power, he has proved by such both his dominion, which is beyond the borders of the traditional concept of 'the land of the Lord' – 'the inheritance of the Lord' – and the impotence of Amon, the God of Egypt, that is, the futility of Egyptian faith in 'a god who cannot save'. The Lord is the God of the universe, and other territorial gods cannot save, that is, cannot act as gods. . . The notion of Israel's election is mentioned here not in order to express any virtue

> of pedigree, but to bridge between two opposing notions: the universal dominion of the Lord, the one God, and his recognition and worship as limited to one people and land.[407]

Rofé's observations are significant for this study's outlook in two ways. First, the idea expressed by Smith and Parker that the editors of Psalm 82 for the first time envision Yahweh's sovereignty over all nations and not just Israel is highly problematic in light of the basis for Yahweh's uniqueness in Deuteronomy. Yahweh is consistently depicted as willfully exercising uncompromised dominion over other gods—who govern the other nations—throughout the Hebrew Bible. One might ask where in the Hebrew Bible we find evidence that Israelite religion ever denied the notion that its God was "the God of gods." Rather than gaining sovereignty over the other nations for the first time after the exilic release, Psalm 82's wording evokes eschatological imagery in envisioning a time when the blameworthy gods are put to death and Yahweh takes all nations to himself *in a manner similar to Israel*.[408] The point of Ps 82:8 is mutual "inheritance status," not newfound global sovereignty.

Second, the relationship of Deuteronomy 4 and 32 and the context of Yahweh's uniqueness highlights the primary way an Israelite would comprehend a violation of his belief in Yahweh. Accepting the reality of other gods was not a denial of the Israelite faith, but worshipping any other god was an absolute violation of the marriage of Israel and Yahweh. As Deurloo comments:

> YHWH, the one God, who holds a unique position in the world of the gods, has acquired a people of his own which, as such, holds a unique position in the world of the peoples and as such commands the peoples' respect (4:6ff.). This exceptional position is Israel's 'to be or not to be' as גוי אחד (2 Sam. 7:23), as a confessional community. In all its generations, all Israel—in Deuteronomy never the 'house of Israel' but always 'children of Israel—is constituted by the statement יהוה אחד.[409]

This feature, that only Yahweh deserved Israel's worship, is at the heart of an Israelite monolatry, and has great explanatory power for the nature of Second Temple Judaism's simultaneous allowance of the elevation

---

[407] Alexander Rofé, "The Monotheistic Argumentation in Deuteronomy IV 32-40: Contents, Composition, and Text," *VT* 35:4 (1985): 439.

[408] One thinks of passages such as Isaiah 19 and Zechariah 14. Additionally, the verb form for the death of the gods in Ps 82:7 does not denote an immediate demise. The verb form, תמותון (from the phrase אָכֵן כְּאָדָם תְּמוּתוּן) is identical to the serpent's true statement to Eve in Gen 3:4 that she and Adam would not immediately die if they disobeyed (cf. לֹא־מוֹת תְּמֻתוּן). There is nothing to compel us, contra Mark S. Smith and Parker, to conclude that the gods are to be considered dead and gone in Israelite religion in light of Psalm 82.

[409] Karel A. Deurloo, "The One God and All Israel in Its Generations," in *Studies in Deuteronomy: In Honor of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (ed. F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, and A. S. van der Woude; VTSup 53;

of mediatorial beings to divine status and its refusal upon pain of death to worship any other than Yahweh. There is no conundrum if one posits the continuation of Israel's pre-exilic monolatry through the exile and into the Second Temple period. An important element of this monolatrous worldview was the divine council. Rather than being a threat, the divine council was a familiar religious paradigm that provided a rationale for Yahweh's control of other gods. In a sense, the council itself provided a theological assurance. From the very beginning, the God of Israel created the other gods and allotted them to the nations in judgment. If Yahweh was mightier than all the gods of every nation combined in the remote past, it was irrational to conclude that His decreed judgment of his own inheritance to only one of the nations and their gods meant Yahweh had been defeated.

The implication of the above is that, in light of the divine plurality of Deut 32:8-9 and the wider allowance for other gods in Deuteronomy and the Dtr literature, the declarations of Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:12, 39 are best understood as reflecting a monolatrous worldview, not an emerging abolition of the other gods. But does the same picture emerge in Deutero-Isaiah?

4.2 *Deutero-Isaiah: Monotheism or Monolatry?*

The most significant figure in Israel's presumed evolution toward intolerant monotheism is the writer of Deutero-Isaiah. Mark S. Smith states the consensus view of Deutero-Isaiah's importance well:

> [I]n Deutero-Isaiah, Yahweh is not only politically exalted as Israel is politically demoted. Yahweh becomes more than the god above all other gods: the existence of other gods is denied. . . . Yahweh is not just the god of Israel (both as land and people) but of all lands and nations.[410]

Smith argues that monotheistic claims prior to Deutero-Isaiah were basically rhetoric articulated for political purposes; that is, they amounted to "Yahwistic monolatry expressed in its rhetoric of monotheism" marking an evolution from that monolatry to true monotheism, the belief in and worship of only one deity.[411]

While this study agrees that Israel's early religion was monolatrous, it dissents from the view that Deutero-Isaiah articulates a worldview shift from monolatry to an intolerant monotheism. Against the evidence to the contrary, this perspective presumes that Yahweh was not considered a global sovereign in pre-exilic

---

Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 37.
[410] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 171.
[411] Ibid., 154.

times, that the second-tier council gods were downgraded to angels, and that intolerant monotheism needed to be enforced via editorial dilution or excision of pre-exilic ideas from the canonical text.

Other scholars have expressed reservations with the certainty of the consensus position. Against the backdrop of the divine council in Deutero-Isaiah, R. N. Whybray notes:

> It has recently been convincingly argued that side by side with [Deutero-Isaiah's] uncompromising monotheism there are clear indications that he retained a belief in the Israelite concept of Yahweh's heavenly council. . . . The concept of Yahweh as possessed of unlimited power, far from leaving him in isolation, actually required as its corollary that, like any human king, he would have at his command a body of servants and messengers attending upon him to carry out his commands. The use of the term "monotheism" to describe Deutero-Isaiah's teaching has tended to obscure this, and wrongly isolate him from his historical context in the history of Israelite religion as if he were an entirely new phenomenon, a Greek philosopher born before his time. There is no evidence for such a view. He was concerned rather to preserve the traditional Israelite view of God than to introduce novel doctrines.[412]

Questions naturally arise in the wake of such a statement. If the belief in the council was retained, and if Deutero-Isaiah evidently wanted to "preserve the traditional Israelite view of God," and if the term monotheism has "obscured" these facts, why do Whybray and other scholars still insist that Deutero-Isaiah denied the existence of other gods? This study suggested earlier that the answer to this question is that the assumption of an evolutionary progression to intolerant monotheism has achieved the status of guiding hermeneutic in much of biblical scholarship. The consensus assumption lacks explanatory power with respect to Deuteronomy. The remainder of this chapter suggests that the "traditional Israelite view of God" referenced by Whybray is monolatry—and was in fact preserved by Deutero-Isaiah.

To begin, scholars of the book of Isaiah have long recognized the presence of the divine council in the book of Isaiah, particularly Isa 40:1-8:[413] As C. Seitz has recently contended, one's understanding of the redactional whole of the book of Isaiah depends to a large extent upon discerning the presence of the divine council in Isa 40:1-8.[414] Seitz argues that Isa 40:1-8 is not a call narrative proper, since it lacks several elements most often found in that genre, but is best understood as a renewal of the Isaianic commission.[415] He then goes

---

[412] Whybray, *The Heavenly Counsellor,* 82-84.
[413] See, for example, H. H. Rowley, "The Council of Yahweh," *JTS* 45 (1944): 151-157; Kingsbury, "Prophets and the Council of Yahweh," 279-286; Polley, "Hebrew Prophecy Within the Council of Yahweh," 141-156; Christopher R. Seitz, "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah," *JBL* 109:2 (1990): 229-247; Frank Moore Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Deutero-Isaiah," *JNES* 12 (1953): 274-277; M. Nissinen, "Prophets in the Divine Council," 4-19.
[414] Seitz, "Divine Council," 229, 243-247.
[415] The similarity between Isaiah 6 and 40 is heightened if neither chapter is a call narrative proper. Seitz's arguments are summarized above, while M. Sweeney notes in detail the problems associated with seeing even chapter 6 as belonging to the call narrative genre (=

on to draw the conclusion that the use of the divine council motif in Isa 40:1-8 is the literary device for fusing the Former things and the Latter things in "a single divine horizon."[416] While it is not necessary to embrace Seitz's conclusions about conceived temporal significance of Isa 40:1-8, recognition of the divine council in these verses is indeed critical for perceiving how the rationale of Deutero-Isaiah is propelled.

Two features of Isa 40:1-8 demonstrate the presence of the divine council. First, there are several plural imperatives in verses 1 (נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ; "console") 2 (דַּבְּרוּ . . . וְקִרְאוּ; "speak . . . and call") and 3 (פַּנּוּ . . . יַשְּׁרוּ; "prepare . . . make straight") as well as plural suffixes (v.1, אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, "your God"; v.3, לֵאלֹהֵינוּ, "for our God"). The commands are issued to an unseen audience,[417] and require actions that cannot be fulfilled by earthly addressees.[418] Second, there is an unequivocal alternation of speakers in verses 1-6. The speaker who issues the plural imperatives of verses 1-2 is presumably Yahweh (addressing his divine court), due to the fact that he refers to the inhabitants of Jerusalem as "my people," and pronounces the sins of those people as having been pardoned. The speaker changes in verse 3, where a voice from the assembly who has just heard the instruction of Yahweh calls out (to plural addressees again) to make preparation for the arrival of Yahweh and his glory (v.5). This heavenly voice then addresses another personage with a singular imperative (v. 6a, . . . קוֹל אֹמֵר קְרָא; "a voice said, 'call . . .'"). The exchange is reminiscent of the council intercourse of Isaiah 6, a correlation often used as support for seeing Isa 40:1-8 as the call narrative of Deutero-Isaiah. Such a correlation is inconclusive, however, since Isa 40:1-8 may just as well have been composed to reference Isaiah 6 rather than to signal a change in prophetic voice.

Seitz and other scholars argue that Isa 40:1-8 is not a call narrative due to its departures from the elements of that genre, namely the absence of the crucial elements of an acceptance of the charge and ensuing reassurance.[419] Instead of a first person acceptance of the commission charge, such as is found in Isa 6:8 ("here am I, send me"), the objection to the singular imperative is not voiced by the prophetic author of Isaiah 40, but

---

vocation account). See Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 1-39* (FOTL XVI; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 134-136.

[416] Seitz, "Divine Council," 245.

[417] Seitz and others have pointed out that interpreting עַמִּי as a vocative is ruled out by the parallel עַל-לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם , which is clearly the intended object and not a vocative.

[418] See especially יַשְּׁרוּ בָּעֲרָבָה מְסִלָּה and the ensuing description of this activity in verses 4-5.

[419] Seitz, "Divine Council," 238-246.

another angelic voice: ". . . and *he* said, what shall I say?"[420] In fact, there is no first-person speech in Deutero-Isaiah that can be distinguished from Yahweh until 48:16b, speech that is attributed in 49:3 to "servant Israel."[421] Consequently, Isa 40:1-8 is an example of deliberation amid the divine council to "renew the Isaianic commission,"[422] and not a prophetic call.

This denial notwithstanding, the fact that the divine council motif used here by the prophetic author/redactor is used only previously in Isaiah 6 signals to the reader that Yahweh is now ready to act once again. Whether the material conforms to the call genre completely or not, the prophetic author/redactor, living on the cusp of the time of deliverance, employs the divine council motif as a persuasive rhetorical technique to motivate the people to action. The sentence of exile having been served (40:2), the glory of Yahweh is returning to Zion (40:5). Reviving the motif telegraphed the message to the captives of Israel that their redemption was drawing nigh, but they must not give in to unbelief (40:12-31). The people must believe that Yahweh is about to subdue Babylon and its impotent idols as he did Syria, Ephraim, and Assyria the last time the council deliberated (chs. 41-48; cp. Isa. 7:1-14, esp. v. 8). Yahweh and his council have chosen a promised servant for just such a task (49-55).

But if the third person verb of Isa 40:6 is to be taken as a second heavenly figure answering the first such personage, and not the prophet himself, who is the herald of verses 9-11? Does the author/redactor forsake the motif in these critical verses – verses that outline the message of comfort *to Zion* (see below on the difficult genitive) commanded in 40:1? Some scholars argue that the herald (the מְבַשֶּׂרֶת) of verses 9-11 is in fact Deutero-Isaiah,[423] and so the chapter may still be a call narrative despite the above incongruities. If the herald is indeed Deutero-Isaiah, then the divine council fades into the background as a literary device, but is not

[420] Seitz (234ff.) discusses the text-critical issues in identifying the questioner in terms of the third person or first person. The latter is reflected in the LXX and 1QIsa[a], which fact has been used to mark chapter 40 as a call narrative for Deutero-Isaiah. Seitz's discussion of the variant readings and the variants themselves have nothing to do with the issue of the divine council, only departures from genre. Both scholars who side with Seitz in agreeing that the departures from the call genre he notes are important and those who still see Isa 40:1-8 as a call accept the plural imperatives of Isa 40:1-8 as pointing to the heavenly host, Yahweh's council. If the first person verb is original, the divine council is still present in view of the plural imperatives in 40:1-2. The person of the verb affects only the potential identification of the herald.

[421] Seitz, "Divine Council," 245.

[422] Ibid.

[423] R.W. Fisher, "The Herald of the Good News in Deutero-Isaiah (40:9; 41:27; 52:7)," PTMS 1 (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1974), 123ff.

eliminated in view of the plural imperatives. That is, the issue of a herald and the plural imperatives are separate issues. The identity of the herald is most conveniently dealt with in connection with Isa 52:7-9 (cp. 40:9).[424]

Isa 52:7-9 and Isa 40:9

7 מַה־נָּאווּ עַל־הֶהָרִים רַגְלֵי מְבַשֵּׂר מַשְׁמִיעַ שָׁלוֹם מְבַשֵּׂר טוֹב מַשְׁמִיעַ יְשׁוּעָה
אֹמֵר לְצִיּוֹן מָלַךְ אֱלֹהָיִךְ׃ 8 קוֹל צֹפַיִךְ נָשְׂאוּ קוֹל יַחְדָּו יְרַנֵּנוּ כִּי עַיִן בְּעַיִן
יִרְאוּ בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה צִיּוֹן׃ 9 פִּצְחוּ רַנְּנוּ יַחְדָּו חָרְבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלָם כִּי־נִחַם יְהוָה
עַמּוֹ גָּאַל יְרוּשָׁלָם׃

7 How welcome on the mountain are the footsteps of the herald announcing happiness, announcing good fortune, announcing victory, telling Zion, "Your God is King!" 8 Hark! Your watchmen raise their voices, as one they shout for joy; for every eye shall behold Yahweh's return to Zion. 9 Raise a shout together, O ruins of Jerusalem, for Yahweh will comfort his people, he will redeem Jerusalem.

9 עַל הַר־גָּבֹהַ עֲלִי־לָךְ מְבַשֶּׂרֶת צִיּוֹן הָרִימִי בַכֹּחַ קוֹלֵךְ מְבַשֶּׂרֶת יְרוּשָׁלָם
הָרִימִי אַל־תִּירָאִי אִמְרִי לְעָרֵי יְהוּדָה הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם׃

9 Ascend a lofty mountain. O herald of joy to Zion; raise your voice with power, O herald of joy to Jerusalem—raise it, have no fear; announce to the cities of Judah: Behold your God!

Clearly there are unmistakable parallels between Isa 40:9 and 52:7, but is the focus of these texts the rousing of the divine council to activity or the ministry of the prophet? There are several features of the text of 40:9-11 that must be engaged.

To begin with, מְבַשֶּׂרֶת is feminine, and the commands issued to the herald in 40:9 are feminine singular. Many would object that these forms rule out the prophet as being the herald. Others also contend that divine council members are not in view here either, since heavenly beings are never depicted or described in female form in the Hebrew Bible, and since the form is singular. In reality, neither candidate for the identification of the herald is eliminated by the morphology of מְבַשֶּׂרֶת. Grammatical gender of nouns need not designate the actual gender of its referent, and there are occasions in the Hebrew Bible where a plainly male figure is described via a feminine participle.[425] The feminine verb forms of 40:9-10 are not determinative as well, since they would be feminine for sake of grammatical

---

[424] The translation is that of the Jewish Publication Society *Tanakh*, except for the rendering, "Yahweh."

[425] Fisher, 120-122. Another examples of a male figure described with a noun having the feminine ָת ending is קהלת (Ecc 1:1; "speaker of an assembly"). However, it is not certain that קהלת is a participle. See Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew, Part One: Orthography and Phonetics* (trans. T. Muraoka; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1993), 266-267, par. 89b; E. Kautzsch, ed.,

agreement only.[426] Hence the feminine form here may point to a masculine figure. Those who would argue that the herald is the prophet also note that the only other occasions in Isaiah in which the participle of בשׂר appears has a masculine singular form (מְבַשֵּׂר ; 41:27 and 52:7). On the other hand, feminine nouns morphologically singular can be used to denote a collective noun, a status that renders the gender issue moot.[427] In fact, one scholar has noted that one of the semantic values of the Semitic *-(a)t* is to create a collective from a participle.[428] The singular of Isa 40:9, then, may actually indicate a group of heralds (the divine council).

Faced with this interpretational ambiguity, some scholars argue that מְבַשֶּׂרֶת is an appositional genitive to "Zion" and "Jerusalem" (מְבַשֶּׂרֶת צִיּוֹן and מְבַשֶּׂרֶת יְרוּשָׁלָם), thereby making Zion/Jerusalem the herald.[429] These genitives have long puzzled commentators as to whether there is a messenger of (to) Zion/Jerusalem, or if Zion/Jerusalem is the messenger (an appositional genitive). This question is perhaps best answered by Isa 52:7, which, alluding back to Isa 40:9, unequivocally takes the herald as an individual sent *to* Zion (לְצִיּוֹן), not as Zion herself. The appositional understanding would also have Zion/Jerusalem speaking to the cities of Judah, which, while not impossible, is awkward.

Are there then any other clues that might break the hermeneutical deadlock of the identity of the herald? R.W. Fisher, while recognizing the indeterminate nature of the evidence noted above, nevertheless opts for a lone masculine figure (Deutero-Isaiah) for the herald because he believes Isa 40:1-8 is a call narrative describing Deutero-Isaiah standing before the divine council to obtain his commission, a position rendered dubious by Seitz's later work.[430] That the form מבשׂר is subsequently used in 41:27 and 52:7 clinches his argument in his mind, for the masculine participle (and without the

---

Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar (trans. G. W. Collins, 1898, and A. E. Cowley, 1909; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 393, Par. 122r.
426 Fisher, 120.
427 Ibid., 199. See also Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 101-104 (esp. par. 6.3.2; 6.4.1-2).
428 E. A. Speiser, "Studies in Semitic Formatives," in *Oriental and Biblical Studies: Collected Writings of E.A. Speiser* (ed. J.J. Finkelstein and Moshe Greenberg; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1967), 416-432.
429 See John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1987), 78, 82. On the appositional effect for the genitive construct, see *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, Par. 128.
430 Fisher, 123.

article at that), unlike its feminine counterpart, does not function as a collective. Building on the masculine singular of 52:7, Fisher confidently states that, "52:7 is actually an exact description of the execution of the commission given in 40:9," which commission in turn is the fulfillment "of Yahweh's command to speak comfortably to Jerusalem found in the opening verse (40:1)."[431] Fisher's extrapolation overlooks one significant detail, however - the commands given in 40:1 are not singular, they are *masculine plural.* Had they referred to the מְבַשֶּׂרֶת, one would expect feminine singular forms, as in the case of all the other imperatives of 40:9-11. In effect, his observation does not support his argument, and actually contradicts his own admission that 40:1-8 occurs in the presence of the divine council. It does, however, open the door for another possibility.

I believe that the answer to whether the herald is an individual or group is that both perspectives are valid. In Isa 40:9, the herald does fulfill the commands of 40:1, but that herald is a collective (in concert with the use of the feminine participle), the divine council itself. The masculine singular participles of 41:27 and 52:7 do indeed refer to an individual, a person who was commissioned to assist in the carrying out of the mandate issued to the council in 40:1,9. If this individual is human, this would be another example of the symbiotic human-divine council relationship seen elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.[432] A likely candidate for this individual who assists the divine council in carrying out its mandate would be one who stood in the prophetic office, since such human-divine collaboration most often involved such individuals.[433] This can be asserted without assenting to the notion that 40:1-8 is a call narrative. Whoever inherited the "renewed Isaianic commission" would suffice.

Whether or not Deutero-Isaiah saw himself performing this role is beyond the scope of this examination. There are several other ways to possibly identify the herald, but space allows only brief comments.

Aside from the prophet himself, one could postulate an unidentified member of the divine council heralds the coming of the glory of the Lord. As this study has pointed out several times in other passages,

---

[431] Ibid., 122, 124.
[432] Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 209-226.

this proposal also has precedent, and an attempt will be made to develop the idea as the study continues. It is noteworthy that at Qumran (11QMelchizedek) Isa 52:7 is linked to an exalted Melchizedek, who is considered the אלהים of Ps 82:1. Melchizedek is also linked at Qumran to the Prince of Light, who is in turn correlated with the "Prince of the host" and "Prince of princes" of Daniel, a figure of importance for divine vice regency in that book.[434]

Whether the individual herald was the prophet or an unnamed divine council figure, the prophetic author/redactor of 52:7-10 is clearly reintroducing divine council terms and themes in those verses. Isa 52:9 ("Break forth! Sing aloud together, O waste places of Jerusalem: for Yahweh has comforted [נִחַם] his people, he has redeemed [גָּאַל] Jerusalem") serves as the content of the message of comfort to captive Israel commanded earlier in 40:1. Not only do the perfect tenses indicate this pronouncement succeeds the initial commands, but 52:7 goes much farther than 40:9, for in it the herald is one who proclaims peace (מַשְׁמִיעַ שָׁלוֹם) and deliverance (מַשְׁמִיעַ יְשׁוּעָה). The author/redactor of Isa 52:7-9 has elaborated on his earlier use of the council motif to heighten the anticipation of his audience. Yahweh has not only directed his heavenly court to prepare for His return of captive Israel, but for his reign in Zion (מָלַךְ אֱלֹהָיִךְ).

On the day this occurs, Zion's "watchmen" will lift up their collective voices for joy (Isa 52:8; קוֹל צֹפַיִךְ נָשְׂאוּ קוֹל יַחְדָּו יְרַנֵּנוּ; "your watchmen shall lift up a voice; together they will lift up a voice"). F. M. Cross, in his article on the divine council in Deutero-Isaiah, included Isa 52:8 on account of the verse's opening phrase, קוֹל צֹפַיִךְ נָשְׂאוּ ("your watchmen shall lift up a voice"), which he contended referred to members of the heavenly council.[435] Against Cross' suggestion is the fact that "watchmen" often in Isaiah (and outside that book) refers to the human prophets appointed by Yahweh as spiritual sentries over His

---

433 Examples include Isaiah 6; Hag 1:13 [cf. Mal 3:1]; Jer 23:18, 22; Amos 3:7 (cf. the use of סוד there).
434 All of these titles are related to each other, as Chapters Six and Seven detail. That Michael is not the referent of these titles in either Daniel or Qumran texts is also demonstrated in these chapters. The view of this study is that these titles speak of the exalted divine vice-regent of the council.
435 Cross, "Divine Council in Second Isaiah," 275, 277.

people, not divine beings. However, certain apocalyptic texts do make mention of unidentified "watchmen" having a role at the time of the Day of Yahweh. Heavenly beings are associated with the final judgment in First Isaiah (cf. Isa 24:21). Other passages that may be taken to refer to watchmen as heavenly beings are Mic 7:4, Jer 31:6, and Jer 51:12. In the contextual setting of Isa 52:8, there are no human watchmen waiting in Jerusalem as it is in ruins. It appears that a group of angelic watchmen-heralds are in view.

In addition to the shadowy activity of the divine council in Deutero-Isaiah, scholars have also pointed to familiar mythological motifs in the book associated with Yahweh's assembly. Isa 40:22-26 contains a number of familiar divine council features:

Isa 40:22-26

22 הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל־חוּג הָאָרֶץ וְיֹשְׁבֶיהָ כַּחֲגָבִים הַנּוֹטֶה כַדֹּק שָׁמַיִם
וַיִּמְתָּחֵם כָּאֹהֶל לָשָׁבֶת׃ 23 הַנּוֹתֵן רוֹזְנִים לְאָיִן שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ כַּתֹּהוּ
עָשָׂה׃ 24 אַף בַּל־נִטָּעוּ אַף בַּל־זֹרָעוּ אַף בַּל־שֹׁרֵשׁ
בָּאָרֶץ גִּזְעָם וְגַם־נָשַׁף בָּהֶם וַיִּבָשׁוּ וּסְעָרָה כַּקַּשׁ
תִּשָּׂאֵם 25 וְאֶל־מִי תְדַמְּיוּנִי וְאֶשְׁוֶה יֹאמַר קָדוֹשׁ׃
26 שְׂאוּ־מָרוֹם עֵינֵיכֶם וּרְאוּ מִי־בָרָא אֵלֶּה הַמּוֹצִיא בְמִסְפָּר צְבָאָם
לְכֻלָּם בְּשֵׁם יִקְרָא מֵרֹב אוֹנִים וְאַמִּיץ כֹּחַ אִישׁ לֹא נֶעְדָּר

22 (It is) he that sits / is enthroned upon the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants (are) as grasshoppers; he stretches out the heavens as a curtain, and spreads them out as a tent in which to dwell. 23 He brings princes to naught; the rulers of this world he makes as nothing. 24 No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff. 25 "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing.

This passage is intriguing on several levels. The reference to the "circle of the earth" (v. 22; חוג־הארץ) and "stretching out (הנוטה) the heavens as a tent (כאהל) in which to dwell" (v. 22) are overt references to the mythological dwelling of El.[436] Likewise the imperative to lift up the eyes on high (מרום) in context with these references speaks of the dwelling of El, the place where the old council gods meet with the high God. The same language occurs elsewhere in Deutero-Isaiah:

Isa 42:5

[436] Habel notes, "The heights of that horizon [*ḥûg*] are the cosmic North, the traditional mythological abode of the gods" (Norman C. Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," *CBQ* 34:4 [1972]: 417-418). See also, Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 42-43, 126.

כֹּה־אָמַר הָאֵל יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטֵיהֶם רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצֶאֱצָאֶיהָ נֹתֵן
נְשָׁמָה לָעָם עָלֶיהָ וְרוּחַ לַהֹלְכִים בָּהּ׃

Thus says *the* God, Yahweh, who created the heavens, and stretched them out (וְנוֹטֵיהֶם); he that spread forth the earth, and that which comes out of it; he that gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to them that walk in it:

Isa 44:24

כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה גֹּאֲלֶךָ וְיֹצֶרְךָ מִבָּטֶן אָנֹכִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כֹּל נֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם
לְבַדִּי רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ מִי אִתִּי מֵאִתִּי׃

Thus says Yahweh, your redeemer, and he that formed you from the womb: I (am) Yahweh who makes everything; who stretches out (נֹטֶה) the heavens alone; who spreads abroad the earth by myself.

Isa 45:11-12

11 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְיֹצְרוֹ הָאֹתִיּוֹת שְׁאָלוּנִי עַל־בָּנַי
וְעַל־פֹּעַל יָדַי תְּצַוֻּנִי׃ 12 אָנֹכִי עָשִׂיתִי אֶרֶץ וְאָדָם עָלֶיהָ בָרָאתִי
אֲנִי יָדַי נָטוּ שָׁמַיִם וְכָל־צְבָאָם צִוֵּיתִי׃

11 Thus says Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker of things to come:[437] Will you question me about my sons,[438] and concerning the product of my hands will you command me? 12 I have made the earth, and created humankind upon it: I have stretched out (נָטוּ) the heavens with my hands and all their starry host have I commanded.

Isa 51:13

וַתִּשְׁכַּח יְהוָה עֹשֶׂךָ נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם וְיֹסֵד אָרֶץ וַתְּפַחֵד תָּמִיד כָּל־הַיּוֹם
מִפְּנֵי חֲמַת הַמֵּצִיק כַּאֲשֶׁר כּוֹנֵן לְהַשְׁחִית וְאַיֵּה חֲמַת הַמֵּצִיק׃

13 You have forgotten Yahweh your creator, who stretched out (נוֹטֶה) the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, and you live in constant dread because of the fury of the oppressor, who is ready to destroy. Yet where is the fury of the oppressor?

The wording of Isa 40:23 is of special interest: "He brings princes to naught; the rulers of this world he makes as nothing." The word for "princes" here is not the familiar שׂרים, but רוזנים, a word that it is certainly within the semantic range of royal sons.[439] The parallelism may equate these princes with the שפטי ארץ ("rulers / judges of the earth") who may be human rulers, thus arguing against divine plurality here. However, the reader should recall that at Ugarit royal divine sons bore the title *tpt*,[440] and so this verse may be referring to divine sons

---

[437] For the translation, see the textual note in Watts, *Isaiah 34-66*, 151, 153.

[438] The preceding context informs the reader that human beings as creations of God are in view here, not Yahweh's divine sons.

[439] The word רוזנים is a Qal masculine plural participle from רזן. The verb occurs elsewhere for royalty in Judg 5:3; Ps 2:2; Prov 8:15; 31:4; Hab 1:10.

[440] Handy, *Among the Host of Heaven*, 113; J. Gray, The Legacy of Canaan, 87; C. Gordon, "tpt," *Ugaritic Textbook*; Wyatt, "Titles of

exercising geographical rule as described in Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9. Benjamin Sommer, in his study of scriptural allusions in Isaiah 40-66, notes that, "A number of themes in the pericope in Isaiah 40 restate those of Psalm 82."[441] Note the description of the gods of Psalm 82, the royal sons of the Most High, who judge the earth:

Psalm 82:5-8

> "Judge (שִׁפְטוּ) the poor and the orphaned; vindicate the the afflicted and the needy. Rescue the poor and the destitute; deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. They don't know, they don't understand (לֹא יָדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ). They go round and around in darkness – and all the foundations of the earth totter (יִמּוֹטוּ כָּל־מוֹסְדֵי אָרֶץ)! I said, 'You are gods, you are all sons of Elyon.' But in fact you will die like humans; you will fall like any of the princes. Rise up, O God, and judge the earth (שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ), for you possess all the nations (בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם)."

Isa 40:17-23

> "All the nations (כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם) are like nothing before Him. . . . To whom would you compare God, and what likeness would you set up in comparison to Him? . . . A skilled artificer seeks to establish for himself an idol that will not totter (לֹא יִמּוֹט). Don't you know (הֲלוֹא תֵדְעוּ)? Did you not hear? Was it not told to you from the beginning? Don't you understand (הֲלוֹא הֲבִינֹתֶם) the foundations of the earth (מוֹסְדוֹת הָאָרֶץ)? The one who sits enthroned above the vault of the earth so that its inhabitants are like grasshoppers . . . who overturns leaders – He has made the rulers of the earth (שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ) into nothing."

The mythologically-charged language in Deutero-Isaiah's text ("sits enthroned [הַיֹּשֵׁב][442] above the vault [עַל־חוּג][443] of the earth") is quite evident, particularly since the context is Isaiah 40's divine council / divine herald scene. Benjamin Sommer, in his study of scriptural allusions in Isaiah 40-66, comments:

> In Psalm 82 we read the following statement about the אלהים (divine beings) who are judged. . . . A number of themes in the pericope in Isaiah 40 restate those of Psalm 82. The passage in Deutero-Isaiah shares with the psalm a concern for the issue of a divine court . . . and an additional theme: a concern with human leadership as it relates to the divine. As Matitiahu Tsevat has argued, the speaker in Psalm 82 comes to the realization that the other divine beings are like mortals, that God can vanquish them as he vanquishes any mortal king. The idea is expressed especially in Ps. 82:7-8: 'All of you will die like humans; you will fall like any of the

---

the Ugaritic Storm God," 422. Wyatt in particular notes that *tpṭ* may be taken as referring to "ruling" (*mlk*).

[441] Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 124.

[442] See also Habel's discussion of this vocabulary and motif: "The verb *yšb* , when applied to Yahweh, frequently means enthronement" (Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," 421).

[443] Cf. Habel once more: "The heights of that horizon [*ḥûg*] are the cosmic North, the traditional mythological abode of the gods" (Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," 421).

princes. Rise up, O God, and judge the earth (שָׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ), for you possess all the nations.' Deutero-Isaiah uses this vocabulary as he stresses that YHWH brings leaders and rulers to naught: 'The one who overturns leaders – He has made the rulers of the earth (שֹׁפְטֵי אֶרֶץ) into nothing.'"[444]

The point here is that, rather than Smith's assertion that the divine council collapses in Psalm 82 due to an emerging exclusivistic monotheism, Deutero-Isaiah uses the divine council scene to argue that, as Yahweh has power to judge these heavenly beings, so will he judge the nations they rule. The plea for Yahweh to "judge the earth" (82:8; שפטה הארץ) once he has pronounced sentence upon the gods who were carrying out their administrations of the nations corruptly (82:2; עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁפְּטוּ־עָוֶל; "how long will you judge unjustly") may be the referent of Isa 40:26's "rulers / judges of the earth" (שפטי־הארץ). If the starry "host" (צבא) of Isa 40:26 is correctly understood as referring to animate divine beings,[445] then little doubt would remain that Deutero-Isaiah affirmed the worldview of Psalm 82 and its divine sons. Certainty is not possible, however.

The most significant issue for this study with respect to Deutero-Isaiah is the question of whether the famous declarations of the prophet reflect monotheism or monolatry. According to Mark S. Smith, the passages below are the three primary texts in Deutero-Isaiah that convince most scholars that Deutero-Isaiah espouses true monotheism by denying the existence of other gods:[446]

Isa 43:10-12

10 אַתֶּם עֵדַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְעַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרְתִּי לְמַעַן תֵּדְעוּ וְתַאֲמִינוּ לִי
וְתָבִינוּ כִּי־אֲנִי הוּא לְפָנַי לֹא־נוֹצַר אֵל וְאַחֲרַי לֹא יִהְיֶה׃ס
11 אָנֹכִי אָנֹכִי יְהוָה וְאֵין מִבַּלְעָדַי מוֹשִׁיעַ׃ 12 אָנֹכִי הִגַּדְתִּי וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי
וְהִשְׁמַעְתִּי וְאֵין בָּכֶם זָר וְאַתֶּם עֵדַי נְאֻם־יְהוָה וַאֲנִי־אֵל׃

10 "You are my witnesses," declares Yahweh, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am He. Before me no god was formed, neither shall there be after me. 11 I, I am Yahweh, and besides me there is no savior. 12 I declared and saved and I proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you: and you are my witnesses," says Yahweh, "that I am God."

Isa 44:6-8

6 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגֹאֲלוֹ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲנִי רִאשׁוֹן וַאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן
וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹהִים׃ 7 וּמִי־כָמוֹנִי יִקְרָא וְיַגִּידֶהָ וְיַעְרְכֶהָ לִי מִשּׂוּמִי

[444] Benjamin Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture*, 124.
[445] Niehr, "Host of Heaven," *DDD*, 429; Lelli, "Stars," *DDD*, 810, 813.
[446] Mark S. Smith, *Origins*, 180ff. I exclude Isaiah 46:9 because it more obviously contains the language of incomparability than the others in the discussion.

עַם־עוֹלָם וְאֹתִיּוֹת וַאֲשֶׁר תָּבֹאנָה יַגִּידוּ לָמוֹ׃ 8 אַל־תִּפְחֲדוּ וְאַל־תִּרְהוּ
הֲלֹא מֵאָז הִשְׁמַעְתִּיךָ וְהִגַּדְתִּי וְאַתֶּם עֵדָי הֲיֵשׁ אֱלוֹהַּ מִבַּלְעָדַי
וְאֵין צוּר בַּל־יָדָעְתִּי׃

6 Thus says Yahweh the King of Israel, and its Redeemer, Yahweh who creates the hosts: "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no god. 7 Who is like me? Let him proclaim it, let him declare and set it forth before me. Who has announced from of old the things that are coming? Let them tell me what is yet to be. 8 Fear not, neither be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses. Is there a god beside me? There is no Rock; I know not any."

Isa 45:5-7, 14, 18, 21

5 אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד זוּלָתִי אֵין אֱלֹהִים אֲאַזֶּרְךָ וְלֹא יְדַעְתָּנִי׃
6 לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ מִמִּזְרַח־שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמִמַּעֲרָבָהּ כִּי־אֶפֶס בִּלְעָדָי אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד׃
7 יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא רָע אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כָל־אֵלֶּה׃ס

5 "I am Yahweh, and there is no other, besides me there is no God beside me: I gird you, though you do not know me, 6 that men may know, from the rising of the sun and from the west, that there is none besides me; I am Yahweh, and there is no other. 7 I form the light and create darkness; I make prosperity and create calamity: I Yahweh do all these things."

14 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה יְגִיעַ מִצְרַיִם וּסְחַר־כּוּשׁ וּסְבָאִים אַנְשֵׁי מִדָּה עָלַיִךְ
יַעֲבֹרוּ וְלָךְ יִהְיוּ אַחֲרַיִךְ יֵלֵכוּ בַּזִּקִּים יַעֲבֹרוּ וְאֵלַיִךְ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ אֵלַיִךְ
יִתְפַּלָּלוּ אַךְ בָּךְ אֵל וְאֵין עוֹד אֶפֶס אֱלֹהִים׃

14 Thus says Yahweh: "The wealth of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to you and be yours; they shall follow you; in chains they shall come over and fall down before you; they shall make supplication to you, saying, 'God is with you only, and there is no other, there is no god besides him'."

18 כִּי כֹה אָמַר־יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים יֹצֵר הָאָרֶץ וְעֹשָׂהּ הוּא
כוֹנְנָהּ לֹא־תֹהוּ בְרָאָהּ לָשֶׁבֶת יְצָרָהּ אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד׃

18 For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens – he is God – who formed the earth and made it; he hath established it; he did not create it a chaos; he formed it to be inhabited. "I am Yahweh; and there is no other."

21 הַגִּידוּ וְהַגִּישׁוּ אַף יִוָּעֲצוּ יַחְדָּו מִי הִשְׁמִיעַ זֹאת מִקֶּדֶם מֵאָז הִגִּידָהּ
הֲלוֹא אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין־עוֹד אֱלֹהִים מִבַּלְעָדַי אֵל־צַדִּיק וּמוֹשִׁיעַ אַיִן זוּלָתִי׃

21 "Declare and present your case; let them take counsel together! Who told this long ago? Who declared it of old? Was it not I, Yahweh? And there is no other god besides me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me."

Nearly fifty years ago, James Barr noted that in no case did Deuteronomy deny the existence of other deities. Barr suggested that, in view of the use of identical phrasings, the same could be said for Deutero-Isaiah. In a monograph entitled, "The Problem of Israelite Monotheism," Barr wrote:

It may also be asked whether the question of mere existence [of other gods] is as important as has been commonly held for those later texts such as Deutero-Isaiah which are supposed to maintain the fullest type of monotheism. When we read in Psalm 14:1 that the fool has said in his heart אין אלהים, we are commonly agreed that the foolish man is no absolute atheist asserting the non-existence of God; he is denying his significance, refusing to reckon with God. Is it not possible to understand in much the same way those places where Deutero-Isaiah uses the same negative particle?"[447]

Taking up Barr's suggestion, and noting the syntactical studies cited above that demonstrated the monolatrous nature of the statements of Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:12, 39, this study argues that the alleged denials of other gods in Deutero-Isaiah's could as well express monolatry. The following eleven "denial phrases" can be drawn from the above passages—phrases that are either identical or nearly identical to those found in Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:12, 39:

1 וְאֵין מִבַּלְעָדַי מוֹשִׁיעַ׃
2 וּמִבַּלְעָדַי אֵין אֱלֹהִים׃
3 הֲיֵשׁ אֱלוֹהַּ מִבַּלְעָדַי וְאֵין צוּר בַּל־יָדָעְתִּי
4 וְאֵין־עוֹד אֱלֹהִים מִבַּלְעָדַי
5 זוּלָתִי אֵין אֱלֹהִים
6 אַיִן זוּלָתִי
7 וְאֵין עוֹד
8 וְאֵין עוֹד אֶפֶס אֱלֹהִים
9 כִּי־אֶפֶס בִּלְעָדָי
10 וְאֵין בָּכֶם זָר
11 לְפָנַי לֹא־נוֹצַר אֵל

The first observation is that the three prepositions (בלעדי[מ], אפס, זולתי) and the combination ואין עוד in the list above are interchangeable. In Isa 45:6 מבלעדי is juxtaposed with both אפס and אין עוד. In like manner, Isa 45:21 has מבלעדי in tandem with זולתי and אין עוד. These interchanges allow an important methodological consideration. In some cases the excluding preposition in Deut 4:35,39 and 32:12, 39 found in the syntactical combination of negative particle plus excluding preposition is identical in denial phrases in Deutero-Isaiah. On other occasions the preposition differs, but it is always a preposition that is used interchangeably in Deutero-Isaiah with those prepositions shared by Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah. In

---

[447] J. Barr, *The Problem of Israelite Monotheism* (TGUOS 17; Glasgow: Glasgow University, 1957-1958), 53-54.

order for one to argue that the denial phrases indicate monolatry in Deuteronomy but monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah, one would have to produce prepositional vocabulary that cannot fit the "negative particle plus excluding preposition" construction. This study argues this cannot be done in such a way that Deutero-Isaiah's rhetoric is shown to be divergent from Deuteronomy. It appears that only prior assumptions about the progression of monotheism lead to a differentiation in meaning for these phrases.

Phrases 1 through 4 in our listing each have the negative particle אין and the preposition מבלעדי in common (save for number 3, where היש forms a rhetorical question with an expected negative answer instead of אין). Deut 4:35 utilizes this same combination (אין עוד מלבדו; "there is none beside him"). Deut 32:39 echoes the same thought, albeit with a different preposition (ואין אלהים עמדי; "there is no God beside me"). In view of the earlier discussion that the wording of Deut 4:35, 39 and 32:39 does not mean the existence of other gods is denied, on what grounds must we conclude that the same language in Deutero-Isaiah means a denial that other gods exist?

Phrases 5 and 6 represent Isa 45:5, 21, and point to the use of the preposition זולתי to describe Yahweh's relationship to other gods (זולתי אין אלהים; "beside me there is no god" and אין זולתי; "there is none [no god] beside me"). Isa 45:21 transparently correlates this phrase with the use of מבלעדי in tandem with אין עוד, the same combination as Deut 4:35. This interchange elicits the conclusion that the negative particle with excluding זולתי does not mean to tell the reader that no other gods exist, only that Yahweh is unique.

Moving on, the phrase אין עוד also occurs in numbers 7 and 8 in our list, thereby aligning those references with the incomparability statements of Deut 4:35, 39. In addition to what has already been said about this correlation, it should also be noted that in Isa 46:9 אין עוד occurs in parallel with אין followed by the comparative preposition כ, which implicitly allows for the existence of other gods. The terms in the ninth

phrase in our list, כי־אפס בלעדי, have already been seen to overlaps with terms in Deuteronomy. As a result, phrases 7 through 9 in our list are no evidence that Deutero-Isaiah denies the existence of other gods.

Phrase number 10 comes from Isa 43:12, and reads ואין בכם זר ("and among you there were no strange gods"). The distinct feature here is the word זר coupled with the particle of negation, אין. This combination is found in Deut 32:12, which is presupposed in Deut 31:29.[448] Due to its correlation with Deut 32:39 and Deut 4:35, 39, it cannot be argued that Deut 32:12 conveys the idea of exclusivistic monotheism. The syntactical overlaps again compel us to rule out the tenth phrase.

This leaves only phrase number 11 for consideration: לפני לא־נוצר אל. The phrase is a claim of Yahweh's pre-existence with respect to all other gods; hence Yahweh is incomparable among the gods. Yahweh, the One who created all the members of the heavenly host (cf. Neh 9:6; Isa 40:26; Ps 33:6) is ontologically pre-eminent. The phrase does not deny that Yahweh created other gods. There is no other god who can claim either creative power or chronological priority, and there will never be another like him.

Finally, one could ask what the author of Deutero-Isaiah (and other canonical authors) could have done to go beyond the above phrases to communicate a denial of the existence of other gods. Two options come to mind. First, Deutero-Isaiah could have explicitly equated the other אלהים with מלאכים. Given the pre-exilic Israelite council's well-defined hierarchy, such an explicit equation would have left no doubt as to a redefinition of the other nations' אלהים. Second, the biblical author could have said something along the lines of "the gods of the council are not gods," or, "the sons of God are not אלהים." Phrases that declare "they are no gods" (לֹא אֱלֹהִים הֵמָּה) and "it is no god" (לֹא אֱלֹהִים הוּא) do occur, but without exception they refer to idols made by human hands and not the entities represented by those idols, or speak of inability in comparison to Yahweh.[449]

---

[448] Sanders, *Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 394.
[449] These references are 2 Kgs 19:18; Isa 37:19; Jer 2:11; 5:7; 16:20; Hos 8:6. 2 Chr 13:8-9 could also be included, though the phrasing is not quite the same (וְהָיָה כֹהֵן לְלֹא אֱלֹהִים). All these passages except Jer 2:11; 5:7 are very plainly dealing with objects. As noted on p. 93 of this study with respect to the work of Y. Hoffman, Jer 2:11 is not a denial of the existence of other gods, but rather speaks of the feckless nature of the other gods. Jer 5:7 follows in that context. As noted earlier, that Israelite writers could and did distinguish between the object and the heavenly being it represented is implicit in the claim that Yahweh created the members of the heavenly host whom he allotted to be worshipped by the other nations (cp. Deut 4:19-20; 32:8-9; 29:25; see also Isa 40:25-26; 45:12; Hos 13:4 (LXX); Pss 33:6; 148:1-5; Neh 9:6). If these passages referred to idols, the logical result would be that the writer is describing Yahweh as an idol

4.3 *Summation*

The goal of this chapter was to demonstrate that the primary evidence for an intolerant monotheism in the Hebrew Bible—statements drawn from Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah—is at best inconclusive, and very likely speaks only to the continuity of the monolatrous pre-exilic worldview that embraced a divine council. The monolatrous context of Deuteronomy, the presence of the divine council and mythologically-charged vocabulary, and the phraseological overlaps between Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah demonstrate that the prevailing paradigm for the breakthrough to monotheism in Israel is hardly beyond question. This study suggests that religious continuity from the pre-exilic to post-exilic periods more coherently accounts for the data and provides greater explanatory power than the consensus view. The next two chapters will examine the remaining exilic and post-exilic canonical material relating to the divine council in search of this same worldview continuity.

maker.

Chapter Five

The Divine Council in Exilic and Early Post-Exilic Canonical Texts

The discussion thus far has challenged the idea that those who composed and fashioned the books of Deuteronomy and Deutero-Isaiah abandoned Israel's pre-exilic monolatrous faith in favor of intolerant monotheism. Brief consideration was also given to Psalm 82, which many proponents of the consensus view of the evolution of Israel's religion toward intolerant monotheism place during the exilic or post-exilic periods due to its allegedly new perspective on Yahweh's global kingship.

This chapter resumes this challenge by searching for divine council terminology and motifs in canonical material considered by most scholars to date to the exilic or post-exilic periods. As was the case with Psalm 82, some of the most conspicuous references to the council, its members, and its bureaucratic structure are found in this material, namely Psalms, Job, and Zechariah.[450] The clarity of this material once again draws attention to an important question this study has raised: If, as Mark S. Smith has argued, the divine council was such a threat to Yahweh's status during and after the exile that the council had to be erased from Israelite religion, why does the canonical literature of these periods include such overt mythological language and retain continuity with the pre-exilic council? As noted earlier, it is one thing to claim that exilic and post-exilic authors refer to a council of other gods in Psalm 82 so as to rhetorically suggest that Israel's religion is ridding itself of these gods in a shift to intolerant monotheism. It is quite another to be consistent with such claims. If the scribes who crafted Psalm 82 had such a goal, one would expect consistency from them when unambiguous references to other divine beings are found in exilic and post-exilic texts. This chapter contends it is difficult to read passages like Job 1-2 and discern in its divine council scenes a rhetorical argument for intolerant monotheism. Consequently, this chapter asks the reader to consider the need for consistency in this regard, and contends that the view that Israelite religion maintained a monolatrous worldview is more consistent and holds greater explanatory power than the consensus view.

5.1 *Divine Plurality and Divine Council Motifs in Late Psalms*

Due to the nature of the Psalms as a corpus, dating any particular psalm is difficult, and the effort really only pertains to its original form. Scholars have long noted that because all psalms have undergone post-exilic editing, they could all be dated to that period.[451] The primary concern at this juncture, however, is to survey the final form of the canonical text for mythological material related to the divine council. According to the view set forth above with respect to the Deuteronomic material, the survival of such material was not due to the redactors' lack of skill or oversight, but to the fact that the monolatry of the redactor allowed for a divine council composed of other gods under the unique ("true") God of Israel.

There are a number of "incomparability phrases" in the psalms that compare Yahweh to the gods or place him above the other gods, as opposed to denying the existence of other gods. Such phrases are inconsistent with intolerant monotheism, and dismissing incomparability phrasing as only a rhetorical device produces two difficulties. First, any rhetorical value for intolerant monotheism is undermined by such phrases since they would amount to exalting Yahweh over beings that the authors deny exist. It is difficult to discern how Yahweh is exalted by being compared to beings that do not exist. Of what use would it be to compare Yahweh's power to a vapor? Second, such phrases cannot be merely rhetorical in pre-exilic literature since Yahweh is still credited with creating the other gods and allotting them to other nations. In other words, they are part of the very fabric of Israelite belief. While it is true that the Gentiles fashioned idols to represent these gods, references like Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9 do not refer to these idols. Yahweh creates the other beings of the host of heaven who must serve him—he does not create dumb idols of stone.

The worldview of the psalmists therefore leaves the reader with the conclusion that these comparative statements are meant to be true comparisons with other gods. Again, if an exclusivistic monotheism were the redactional goal, the following texts[452] would have been a priority for editorial alteration.

Ps 86:8

---

[450] This chapter does not include the book of Daniel, which is the focus of Chapter Six.
[451] R. P. Carroll, "Psalm 78: Vestiges of a Tribal Polemic," *VT* 21 (1971): 144.
[452] All of these psalms contain evidence for exilic or post-exilic dating, or even late into the Second Temple period. See Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 379-380, 500, 507; M. Buttenwieser, *The Psalms* (New York: Ktav, 1969), 317-320, 686-688, 845-847; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60-150* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 181, 246, 252, 257-258, 492, 497-498, 506.

אֵין־כָּמוֹךָ בָאֱלֹהִים אֲדֹנָי וְאֵין כְּמַעֲשֶׂיךָ׃

Among the gods there is none like you, O Lord; neither [are there any works] like your works.

Ps 95:3

כִּי אֵל גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃

For Yahweh is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Ps 96:4

כִּי גָדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד נוֹרָא הוּא עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃

For Yahweh is great, and deserving of exceedingly great praise: he is to be feared above all gods.

Ps 97:7

יֵבֹשׁוּ כָּל־עֹבְדֵי פֶסֶל הַמִּתְהַלְלִים בָּאֱלִילִים הִשְׁתַּחֲווּ־לוֹ כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃

All who served images were put to shame; those who boasted in mere idols; even all the gods bowed down to him.[453]

Ps 97:9

כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה עֶלְיוֹן עַל־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ מְאֹד נַעֲלֵיתָ עַל־כָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃

For you, O Yahweh, are Most High above all the earth: you are exalted far above all gods.

Ps 135:5

כִּי אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־גָדוֹל יְהוָה וַאֲדֹנֵינוּ מִכָּל־אֱלֹהִים׃

For I know that Yahweh is great, and that our lord is above all gods.

Ps 136:2

הוֹדוּ לֵאלֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ׃

O give thanks to the God of gods: for his mercy endures for ever.

Ps 138:1

לְדָוִד אוֹדְךָ בְכָל־לִבִּי נֶגֶד אֱלֹהִים אֲזַמְּרֶךָּ׃

I will praise you with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise to you.

A few observations about the above psalms are appropriate. As with Deuteronomic language, the claim is not made that other gods do not exist; they are simply ineffectual (Ps 86:8). Several of these psalms relate to pre-exilic beliefs in the kingship of Yahweh (Ps 95:3, 96:4; 97:9).[454] While some of the phrases could be construed as referencing merely honorific titles of Yahweh without evincing any particular belief (Ps 136:2; "God of gods"), others would amount to nonsensical utterances in the mouth of the worshipper if the belief in the existence of other gods were not genuine (Ps 95:3; 96:4; 97:7-9; 135:5; 138:1). When taken in the context of

[453] The translation is Tate's (*Psalms 51-100*, 516).
[454] Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 507.

the above psalms, late psalms appealed to by some to argue for exclusivistic monotheism are seen to merely frame an argument for Yahweh's greater potency, not his exclusive existence. As J. Day notes with respect to Pss 95:3 and 97:7 above, "in a number of instances in the Psalter, the gods are regarded as forming Yahweh's heavenly council, a belief somewhat analogous to that of Canaanite religion . . . [which is] an interesting way of approaching monotheism!"[455]

Aside from references to Yahweh's incomparability among the gods, there are other texts in the Psalms that speak of divine council members. Ps 89:9, 37-38 is one such example,[456] and is significant for its reference to an unidentified "witness," a feature of other divine council texts and "legal" proceedings of the council (cf. עד in Ps 89:38).[457]

9 יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת מִי־כָמוֹךָ חֲסִין יָהּ וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ׃
O Yahweh, God of hosts, who is like you, Mighty Yah? With your faithfulness around you?[458]

37 זַרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה וְכִסְאוֹ כַשֶּׁמֶשׁ נֶגְדִּי׃
38 כְּיָרֵחַ יִכּוֹן עוֹלָם וְעֵד בַּשַּׁחַק נֶאֱמָן סֶלָה׃
36 His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. 37 As the moon it shall be established for ever, and a witness in the clouds shall be faithful. Selah.

As noted earlier, Psalm 89 contains several explicit references to the divine council. Ps 89:6, 8 (Hebrew) refer to the "assembly of the holy ones" (קהל קדושים) and the "council of the holy ones" (סוד קדושים). Verse 7 expresses Yahweh's incomparability with respect to the "sons of the gods" (בני אלים). To these allusions Dahood would plausibly emend אֱמוּנָתְךָ ("your faithfulness") in 89:9 to וֶאֱמוּנָתֶיךָ, understanding the abstract noun "faithfulness" as "faithful ones" in view of the immediately

455 J. Day, *Psalms* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 123-124.
456 Psalm 89 is considered by many scholars to have been composed by two authors at different times (one pre-exilic, the other exilic or post-exilic) and then spliced together by an editor during the exilic or post-exilic era. In any case, the references to the divine council were left intact and quite explicit. See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 413-418, esp. 417.
457 The word עד is often used in legal accusation and sentencing in the Law. See Num 35:30; Deut 17:6-7 among numerous examples.
458 See the ensuing discussion regarding Dahood, who argues that וֶאֱמוּנָתְךָ should be emended with a plural suffix (וֶאֱמוּנָתֶיךָ) and so read "your faithful ones," an allusion to Yahweh's council.

following plural סְבִיבוֹתֶיךָ ("surrounding you").[459] The change evokes imagery of the members of Yahweh's divine court.

Ps 89:37-38 has received a good deal of scholarly attention. At issue is the identity of the faithful witness in the clouds of verse 38. E. Theodore Mullen argues that the witness could be an unidentified member of the divine council,[460] whereas P. Mosca, rejecting Mullen's thesis, contends that the witness is the Davidic throne itself.[461] T. Veijola believes the witness is Yahweh himself.[462]

Veijola marshals several convincing arguments against the position of Mosca. Mosca translates the debated phrase וְעֵד בַּשַּׁחַק נֶאֱמָן as "an enduring witness in the sky," a rendering that presupposes the participle נֶאֱמָן is not the predicate of a nominal clause, but an attributive adjective modifying עֵד, which would in turn describe the throne.[463] Citing Brockelmann, Veijola notes in rebuttal that an attributive adjective "must follow the noun immediately, with the only exception being the genitive construction, which is not the case in v 38b."[464] As a result, the participle must be taken as the predicate: "And a witness in the clouds shall be faithful."

Mullen appeals to Job 16:19-21 as a conceptual parallel to understanding the cloud witness as a divine council member.[465] That passage has Job referring to his "witness" (עד) in the heavens, his "guarantor" on high who mediates his thoughts to God:

19 גַּם־עַתָּה הִנֵּה־בַשָּׁמַיִם עֵדִי וְשָׂהֲדִי בַּמְּרוֹמִים׃
20 מְלִיצַי רֵעָי אֶל־אֱלוֹהַּ דָּלְפָה עֵינִי׃
21 וְיוֹכַח לְגֶבֶר עִם־אֱלוֹהַּ וּבֶן־אָדָם לְרֵעֵהוּ׃

19 Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my advocate is on high. 20 My friends scorn me, but my eye pours out [tears] to God. 21 O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man [pleads] for his companion!

---

459 Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms II, 51-100* (AB 17; New York: Doubleday, 1968), 313.
460 E. Theodore Mullen, Jr., "The Divine Witness and the Davidic Royal Grant: Ps 89:37-38," *JBL* 102:2 (1983): 207-218.
461 P. G. Mosca, "Ugarit and Daniel 7: A Missing Link," *Bib* 67 (1986): 508-517; idem, "Once Again the Heavenly Witness of Ps 89:38," *JBL* 105 (1986): 27-37.
462 Timo Veijola, "The Witness in the Clouds: Ps 89:38," *JBL* 107:3 (1988): 413-417.
463 Ibid., 414.
464 Ibid.
465 Mullen, "Divine Witness," 217. "Guarantor" is Mullen's translation.

Ultimately, Veijola prefers his interpretation that Yahweh is the witness in the clouds based on three considerations: (1) While the members of the divine council are in the clouds, Yahweh also dwells there; (2) Yahweh may be a witness against himself based on the analogy that in certain covenantal contexts (citing Josh 24:22) this is the case; and (3) He rejects Mullen's proposed parallel saying, "I see no reason to conjecture, with Mullen . . . that the 'heavenly witness' in Job 16:19 would be some mythical divine figure; rather, the passage is a sign of the internal tension in Job's conception of God."[466]

This writer tends to view Mullen's argument as the more coherent of the three since the "council intercession" motif seems apparent in other Job texts (see Section 5.2) and because of the precedent for the "unidentified witness" motif in widely recognized divine council passages like Isaiah 40. There is much more to Psalm 89 with respect to the divine council than this single issue, namely its relationship to the divine council scene of Daniel 7.[467] It is sufficient for now to note that Mullen's view is quite workable and Veijola's objection to the parallel of Job 16:19-21 fails to take the divine council in Job into consideration.

It has already been noted several times in this study that one of the evidences of divine plurality in the Hebrew Bible is the presence of the second-tier Canaanite deities רשף, דבר, and קטב as military members of Yahweh's retinue.[468] A number of scholars of Israelite religion have proposed that the use of רשף in several psalms could be construed as mythological, particularly when accompanied by other motifs that have firm association with the meeting place of the divine council. For example, the word for "arrows" in Ps 144:5-7 derives from *רשף.

Ps 144:5-7

5 יְהוָה הַט־שָׁמֶיךָ וְתֵרֵד גַּע בֶּהָרִים וְיֶעֱשָׁנוּ׃ 6 בְּרוֹק בָּרָק וּתְפִיצֵם
שְׁלַח חִצֶּיךָ וּתְהֻמֵּם׃ 7 שְׁלַח יָדֶיךָ מִמָּרוֹם פְּצֵנִי וְהַצִּילֵנִי מִמַּיִם רַבִּים
מִיַּד בְּנֵי נֵכָר׃

5 O Yahweh, stretch out your heavens and come down! Touch the mountains, and let them smoke! 6 Flash forth lightning, and scatter them! Shoot forth your arrows, and destroy them! 7 Stretch forth your hand from on high! Rescue me, and deliver me from the many waters, from the hand of strange children!

---

466 Veijola, "Witness," 417, note 28.

467 The debate over the identity of the witness of Psalm 89 is also discussed in Chapter Six with respect to Daniel 7 and the "Son of Man" problem.

468 See Mark S. Smith, *Early History of God*, 47, 67-68, 149; Sanders, *Provenance of Deuteronomy 32*, 401; P. Xella, "Resheph," *DDD*, 702; W. Fulco, *The Canaanite God Resheph.*

J. Day has cogently argued that the lightning and arrows in this late psalm refer to members of Yahweh's heavenly vanguard.[469] The fact that these weapons come from "on high" (ממרום) and that Yahweh is asked to "come down" (תרד) speaks to a divine council association. It is also noteworthy that “the tradition of Resheph as a god of pestilence is attested in Deut 32:24.”[470] The god קטב is also referenced in this important divine council chapter (32:23).

The motifs of “stretching out (נטה) the heavens like a tent” and the reference to “many waters” (מים רבם) are both reminiscent of El’s abode on the divine mountain.[471] The Hiphil imperative (הט) of the verb נטה ("stretch out") in 144:5 has mythological overtones. As N. Habel has pointed out, Yahweh's "stretching out" of the heavens speaks to an ancient creation tradition that points to "incontestable might, both primordial and present," and the "preparing of theophany, the place of celestial appearance, the shrine for kingship."[472] The "stretching out" of the heavens is also "a variant way of expressing the stretching out of heaven like a tent . . . the preparation of the divine abode."[473] These motifs are evident in pre-exilic expressions of the meeting place of the divine council, the tent of El and the watery abode:

Ps 104:1-6

1 בָּרֲכִי נַפְשִׁי אֶת־יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי גָּדַלְתָּ מְּאֹד הוֹד וְהָדָר לָבָשְׁתָּ׃
2 עֹטֶה־אוֹר כַּשַּׂלְמָה נוֹטֶה שָׁמַיִם כַּיְרִיעָה׃ 3 הַמְקָרֶה בַמַּיִם עֲלִיּוֹתָיו
הַשָּׂם־עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ׃ 4 עֹשֶׂה מַלְאָכָיו רוּחוֹת
מְשָׁרְתָיו אֵשׁ לֹהֵט׃ 5 יָסַד־אֶרֶץ עַל־מְכוֹנֶיהָ בַּל־תִּמּוֹט עוֹלָם וָעֶד׃
6 תְּהוֹם כַּלְּבוּשׁ כִּסִּיתוֹ עַל־הָרִים יַעַמְדוּ־מָיִם׃

1 Bless Yahweh, O my soul! O Yahweh my God, you are very great! You are clothed with honor and majesty, 2 covering yourself with light as with a garment, who has stretched out the heavens like a tent, 3 who has laid the beams of your chambers on the waters, who makes the clouds your chariot, who rides on the wings of the wind, 4 who makes the winds your messengers, fire and flame thy ministers. 5 You set the earth on its foundations, so that it should never be shaken. 6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

---

469 John Day, "Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm XXIX and Habakkuk III, 9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah VI," *VT* 39: 2 (1979): 143-151.
470 P. Xella, “Resheph,” *DDD,* 702.
471 H. G. May, "Cosmic Connotations of *Mayim Rabbim*, Many Waters," 42-43.

Commenting on Psalm 104, Habel notes:

> The theophanic elements of this text can hardly be avoided. *Hôd* and *hādār* belong to the language of divine theophany and cultic epiphany (Pss 29:2; 96:6; Job 40:10). When Yahweh makes his cosmic appearance, his glorious presence (*hôd*) covers the heavens (Hab 3:3). Light is the theophanic mode of self-manifestation which both reveals his presence and veils his holiness. As in comparable comings, celestial forces are his attendants. He may ride the clouds (cf. Ps. 68:4) or fly on the wind like a cherub (Ps. 18:11); he may have ten thousand messengers at his side (Dt. 33:2) or have fire, lightning and pestilence in his entourage (Hab 3:4-5).[474]

Habel's reference to Hab 3:4-5, again a very late text in Israel's prophetic tradition, links the motifs of the divine entourage in Psalm 104 to the "lightning" and "arrows" of Ps 144:5-7. There is conceptual continuity between the descriptions of Yahweh's weapons and warriors in these three passages.

The reference to Yahweh stretching forth his hand "from on high" (במרום) in Ps 144:7 is also important for its divine council association. The term carries several mythological connotations and is congruent with Micah 6:6:

Mic 6:6

בַּמָּה אֲקַדֵּם יְהוָה אִכַּף לֵאלֹהֵי מָרוֹם הַאֲקַדְּמֶנּוּ בְעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּנֵי שָׁנָה׃

With what shall I approach Yahweh, and bow before the God of the heights? Shall I approach him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old?

Yahweh's dwelling is also described as being במרומים in a late psalm of ascent:[475]

Ps 148:1

הַלְלוּ יָהּ הַלְלוּ אֶת־יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם הַלְלוּהוּ בַּמְּרוֹמִים׃

Praise Yah! Praise Yahweh from the heavens! Praise him in the heights.

The language in Psalm 148 harks back to pre-exilic references to the mythological heights:

Ps 78:68-69

68 וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה אֶת־הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב׃

69 וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רָמִים מִקְדָּשׁוֹ כְּאֶרֶץ יְסָדָהּ לְעוֹלָם׃

68 But [Yahweh] chose the tribe of Judah, mount Zion which he loved. 69 And he built his sanctuary like the heights, like the earth, which he hath established forever.

Ps 48:2-3

2 גָּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר־קָדְשׁוֹ׃

---

472 Norman C. Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," 419, 422.
473 Ibid., 422.
474 Ibid.
475 Buttenwieser, *The Psalms*, 358-359.

3 יְפֵה נוֹף מְשׂוֹשׂ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ הַר־צִיּוֹן יַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן קִרְיַת מֶלֶךְ רָב׃

2 Great is Yahweh, and worthy of exceeding praise in the city of our God, in his holy mountain. 3 It is beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth—Mount Zion, the heights of Ṣaphon, the city of the great King.

There are demonstrable references, then, to divine plurality and pre-exilic divine council motifs in psalms composed during or after the exile, when exclusivistic monotheism was allegedly a foregone conclusion, and after the divine council had supposedly faded from Israel's faith.

Psalm 56:3 is unusual and is perhaps best understood in conceptual parallel to the pre-exilic psalm, Ps 92:9:[476]

Ps 56:3

שָׁאֲפוּ שׁוֹרְרַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם כִּי־רַבִּים לֹחֲמִים לִי מָרוֹם׃

My adversaries would swallow me up every day: for many fight against me, O Most High.

The verse is difficult because it is hard to know how to integrate מרום into the translation. While Ps 144:7 undoubtedly speaks of Yahweh's abode, the מרום of Ps 56:3, which is likely exilic,[477] describes Yahweh's status as Most High god. While the term typically refers to Yahweh's abode, here it has been taken as an epithet of Yahweh.

Ps 92:9

וְאַתָּה מָרוֹם לְעֹלָם יְהוָה׃

But you, O Yahweh, are most high for evermore.

Psalm 92:9 clearly has מרום as an epithet of Yahweh. If מרום in fact describes Yahweh in Ps 56:3, that text could be viewed as a reference to the council as an extension of Yahweh given the idea of council intercession for humans described below in the book of Job. This perspective is reminiscent of instances at Ugarit where references to El and the council as a deliberative body occur in parallel.[478]

---

[476] Psalm 92 is considered pre-exilic due to its kingship language. See Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 258, 465; S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (trans. D. R. Thomas; vol. 1; Oxford: Basil-Blackwell, 1962), 142; J. H. Eaton, *Kingship in the Psalms* (SBT 2.32; London: SCM Press, 1976), 55-59.

[477] Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 68.

[478] Mullen, *The Divine* Council, 128-130. See *KTU* 1.2.I:15-16, where the phrase *pḫr mʿd* parallels *ṯr ʾbh ʾl*.

5.2 *Divine Plurality and Council Activity in the Book of Job*

It has long been recognized that Job 1:6-13 and 2:1-7 are explicit divine council scenes. As P. Day notes, "the imagery of Yahweh surrounded by the celestial court is the traditional setting for council scenes."[479] The vocabulary in these two passages (cf. 1:5,6; 2:1) associated with the second-tier deities (בני־האלהים, the "sons of God") was noted in Chapter Two, and so commentary in this chapter will be brief to avoid redundancy.

It is worth emphasizing here that the two references to בני־האלהים occur in a book that most scholars consider to be exilic or post-exilic.[480] The vocabulary of divine sonship is consistent with Psalm 82, where the בני־עליון ("sons of the Most High") are called אלהים ("gods"). It is surprising that discussions assuming the triumph of intolerant monotheism so often fail to situate these references in the chronological development of Israel's religion. Job 1-2 is an example of transparent usage of the language of divine plurality in a period when exclusivistic monotheism had allegedly achieved its breakthrough, and yet there is no justification in this passage to argue that the scenes are used by the author to slay the gods of the nations and vault Yahweh to global kingship in the midst of the exilic crisis.

Commentators on Job and other post-exilic divine council texts tend to look for apparent innovations within the larger council motif rather than raise the question of the chronological disconnect described above. For example, Mullen asserts that the emergence of the *śaṭan* (שטן; "adversary") as a named, independent adversarial figure in council scenes was an innovation that came about with the naming of angels or archangels in Second Temple Jewish texts.[481] S. Olyan, in his study of later Jewish angelology, also sees the naming of angels as novel.[482] In both cases it is assumed that the term בני־האלהים underwent a semantic downgrading in the post-exilic worldview to reflect belief in angels, not the old council gods.

---

479 Peggy L. Day, *An Adversary in Heaven: Śaṭan in the Hebrew Bible* (HSM 43; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 79.
480 D. J. A. Clines, *Job 1-20* (WBC 17; Dallas: Word Books, 1989); J. J. M. Roberts, "Job and the Israelite Religious Tradition," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays* (ed. J. J. M. Roberts; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 112. Linguistic evidence seems to favor a date in the sixth century B.C.E. or later (see A. Hurvitz, "The Date of the Prose Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered," *HTR* 67 [1974]: 17-34).
481 Mullen, *Divine Council*, 274-277.
482 Saul M. Olyan, *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr - Siebeck, 1993). It is certainly true that later Judaism, especially the rabbinic era, developed an amazingly complex angelology, with angels grouped into various "brigades," but the development is one of detail, not creating new tiers of the council or downgrading the

But point of fact, the possession of a name, the exercise of freedom, and an accusatory council role in no way evince a semantic downgrading from pre-exilic בני־האלהים to מלאכים. As already noted in Chapters Two and Three of this study, all of these "innovations" can be found in the ancient Ugaritic material and in pre-exilic Israelite texts. The "prosecutorial" feature of council activity is well known from Zech 3:1-7 and also outside Israel, and so the activity of the *śaṭan* is no innovation.[483] That second-tier deities exhibited independence and freedom is also evident from earlier council descriptions. Second-tier council members bear names at Ugarit and in canonical pre-exilic literature prior to Job – most notably רשף, דבר, and קטב in Habakkuk 3. There is nothing in Job 1-2 that argues for a link to later Jewish angelology in terms of innovation.

The divine council in Job is not restricted to the familiar passages in Job 1-2 and the role of the *śaṭan* as one who brings a charge in the council. Several other texts in Job convey the belief that council members can serve a mediatorial role on behalf of human beings.

Job 16:19-21

19 גַּם־עַתָּה הִנֵּה־בַשָּׁמַיִם עֵדִי וְשָׂהֲדִי בַּמְּרוֹמִים׃
20 מְלִיצַי רֵעָי אֶל־אֱלוֹהַּ דָּלְפָה עֵינִי׃
21 וְיוֹכַח לְגֶבֶר עִם־אֱלוֹהַּ וּבֶן־אָדָם לְרֵעֵהוּ׃

19 Also now, behold, my witness is in the heavens, and my intercessor is in the heights. 20 My friends scorn me, but my eye pours out [tears] to God. 21 O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man [pleads] for his companion!

In the discussion of the unnamed witness of Ps 89:38-39, it was noted that Mullen argues that the witness of those verses is an unidentified council member. I agree, partially on the basis of Job 16:19-21. The witness is clearly "in the heavens" (בשמים) and "in the heights" (במרומים) and is not Yahweh or the throne of David.[484] מרומים is part of the stock mythological vocabulary for the location of the divine dwelling, associated with the meeting place of the divine council. מרומים also occurs in Job 25:2 ("Dominion and fear[485]

---

council. The possession (and literary disclosure) of a name does not mark a transition from "god" to "angel" with respect to the divine council.

[483] Mullen, *The Divine Council,* 228; Parker, "Council," *DDD,* 205; Carol L. Meyers and Eric M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8* (AB 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 184.

[484] See the earlier discussion of Psalm 89 in Chapter Three for more detail.

[485] The terms המשל and פחד are interesting in this context. The former does not appear in personified form in the Hebrew Bible, though in the New Testament it occurs in this regard two times to denote a class of angel (κυριότης; Eph 1:21; Col 1:16). In literature influenced by the New Testament the term occurs with the same meaning (see P.W. van der Horst, "Dominion," *DDD,* 262). פחד, on

are with him, he makes peace in his high places [במרומיו]") and Job 31:2 ("For what portion of God is there from above? And (what) inheritance of the Almighty from the heights [במרומים]?"). The semantic equivalent רמים occurs in Job 21:22 ("Will any teach God knowledge, seeing that he judges those that are on high?").

Job 5:1 also refers to some sort of council mediation:

Job 5:1
קְרָא־נָא הֲיֵשׁ עוֹנֶךָּ וְאֶל־מִי מִקְּדֹשִׁים תִּפְנֶה׃
Call now; is there an answer for you? To which of the holy ones will you turn?

A few observations are appropriate. First, the rhetorical question here is best considered in light of the twofold sense of "council" in a patriarchal or monarchical context as described in Chapter One. There is the council proper as deliberative body, composed of the patriarch or Most High and the royal sons, and the council at large, which is inclusive of the servant-class attendants who lack authority but, since they serve the royal household, are present at council activities. Job 5:1 most likely is an allusion to the council at large given the elasticity of קדשים, both outside and within Job, as illustrated momentarily.

Second, the idea of the divine council intervening in human affairs is consistent with the pre-exilic council worldview (1 Kings 22, the fate of Ahab; Isaiah 6, the fate of Judah). Personal mediation on the part of a divine council member has precedence at Ugarit in the Kirta Epic, where El assists the king in his quest for a son.[486] In the Hebrew Bible Yahweh utilizes his chief agent / vice-regent for personal intervention in an individual's life.[487] Nevertheless, mediation of council members for the purpose of *seeking justice* in the council appears to be an innovation.

Job 16:19-21 and 5:1 are a convenient backdrop to several other passages in Job that speak of divine council personnel.

---

the other hand, may be personified in the Hebrew Bible, but this is speculative. Alt, for example, understood the word this way in the phrase פחד יצחק (Gen 31: 42, 53) on the basis of other archaic expressions (אביר יעקב; Gen 49:24) and "God of X" pattern (M. Kockert, "Fear of Isaac," *DDD,* 329-331).

[486] *KTU* 1.14-1.16.

[487] For example, see Gen 16 (Hagar) and 1 Kings 19 (Elijah).

Job 15:8

הַבְסוֹד אֱלוֹהַ תִּשְׁמָע וְתִגְרַע אֵלֶיךָ חָכְמָה׃

Have you listened in the council of God? Are you the only one with wisdom?

Job 4:18

הֵן בַּעֲבָדָיו לֹא יַאֲמִין וּבְמַלְאָכָיו יָשִׂים תָּהֳלָה׃

Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly:

Job 15:15

הֵן בִקְדֹשׁו בִּקְדֹשָׁיו לֹא יַאֲמִין וְשָׁמַיִם לֹא־זַכּוּ בְעֵינָיו׃

Behold, he puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavenly ones are not clean in his sight.

Job 25:5-6

5 הֵן עַד־יָרֵחַ וְלֹא יַאֲהִיל וְכוֹכָבִים לֹא־זַכּוּ בְעֵינָיו׃
6 אַף כִּי־אֱנוֹשׁ רִמָּה וּבֶן־אָדָם תּוֹלֵעָה׃

Behold if even the moon is not bright and the stars are not pure in his sight, 6 How much less man, [who is] a worm, and the son of man, [who is] a worm?

Job 33:23-24

אִם־יֵשׁ עָלָיו מַלְאָךְ מֵלִיץ אֶחָד מִנִּי־אָלֶף לְהַגִּיד לְאָדָם יָשְׁרוֹ
וַיְחֻנֶּנּוּ וַיֹּאמֶר פְּדָעֵהוּ מֵרֶדֶת שָׁחַת מָצָאתִי כֹפֶר׃

If he has an angel, an advocate, one among a thousand to declare what is right for a man, then he will be gracious to him and say, “Redeem him[488] from going down to the pit, for I have found his ransom.

Job 15:7 references the first man, Adam, who by implication was believed to have listened to the divine council (cf. Ezek 28:13 for Eden as the cosmic mountain of God, the place where council was held). The statement in 15:8 from the mouth of Eliphaz suggests that if Job had "stood in the council" (cp. Jer 23:18, 22 and Isa 6), then he would have the authority to correctly determine the reason for his suffering. Since he has not, Eliphaz offers his own explanation. Eliphaz's comments are also a pointed criticism: does Job really imagine he is as wise as Adam?[489] Adam's great wisdom, gained by listening in the divine council, did not help him. D. J. A. Clines comments: "Eliphaz's attitude has been made clear in the previous chapter: Job is essentially a righteous man, but—like any human (or angel; cf. 4:18)—he has his faults and is suffering for them. . . . Job shares the frailty of all created things."[490] Just because Adam was exceedingly wise because of his

[488] The MT reads פדעהו which Hartley notes is a *hapax legomenon* (John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job* [NICOT; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1988], 445, n. 1). Other commentators prefer to read פרעהו (“let him loose”) supposing graphic confusion. Ps 49:8-10 appears to be a parallel passage, however, having the same vocabulary (כפר, שׁחת) including a form of פדה.

[489] Clines, *Job 1-20*, 350.

[490] Ibid., 137.

admission into the divine council, his knowledge did not help him avoid corruption. His wisdom was not beyond fallibility. In fact, not even heavenly beings meet these criteria.

There are two ways one could view the parallel relationships in Job 4:18; 15:15, and 25:5. It is possible that God views each tier of the council, from his royal sons to the lowly attendants, as possessing flaws. This new appeal to the "holy ones" in Job 5:1 is seen as a reference only to the council members, the divine sons. This is unlikely due to the Hebrew Bible's broad use of קדושים. That this objection is warranted follows from the other generic terms in Job 4:18; 15:15, and 25:5 used in parallel. Job 4:18 very clearly references the מלאכים as the attendant class (עבדים) that serves the council. Yahweh is said to distrust (לֹא יַאֲמִין) these מלאכים. The identical wording is used in 15:15, where those heavenly beings who are deemed impure in Yahweh's sight (לֹא־זַכּוּ בְעֵינָיו) are קדושים. The term קדושים is in parallel to שׁמים in 15:15, which should therefore be taken as personified, much like the reference in Deut 32:43 (Qumran). The כוכבים of Job 25:5 are likewise described with the same accusatory language (לֹא־זַכּוּ בְעֵינָיו). Hence קדשׁים, שׁמים, and כוכבים are overlapping, generalized terms.

It should also be noted that if Mark S. Smith is correct that independence is a quality of deity, then the references in Job to these beings as impure undermine the view that the old council gods have been relegated to a lower status. The issue is that for a being to be impure or blameworthy requires that being to have a free, distinct will. This is suggestive of Smith's deity trait of independence, the ability to act freely (but not autonomously). Since the word מלאכים is used in these parallel passages in Job, the possession of a distinct will would in turn—again depending on the validity of Smith's observation—perhaps support the notion that מלאכים are אלוהים on errand for Yahweh. As noted in Chapter Two, this possibility is not without its own difficulties.

Interestingly, the idea of the futility of an appeal to council seems thematic in Job. As Clines notes, "there is a lack of specificity in these texts; there is no reason why such intercession should be expected to help

given the council members' lack of perfection."[491] The point seems to be that Job cannot expect the intercession to do any good, since it is his responsibility to endure the suffering that has come upon him, and he is suffering due to the will of the sovereign God.[492] It is almost as if Eliphaz witnessed or overheard the council deliberation of Job 1-2. In fact, to the reader's surprise, he implies that he has!

The only possible exception to the apparent futility is likely Job 33:23, which in context appears to suggest that a heavenly advocate may be able to deliver Job from suffering ("If he has an angel [מלאך], an advocate , [מליץ], one among a thousand to declare what is right for a man, then he will be gracious to him and say, "Redeem him from going down to the pit, for I have found his ransom"). Elihu is apparently declaring that there is a heavenly mediator for each sufferer, specifically a מלאך who serves as advocate and directs his charge in the right course of action that will help him escape God's chastening. This מלאך is referred to as "one among a thousand," which may mean that an ordinary angel is in view. However, Eichrodt suggests on the basis of the same phrase in Job 9:3, where he sees a restrictive meaning, that a special מלאך is in view, namely the מלאך יהוה.[493] If his proposal has merit, then Elihu may be singling out the מלאך יהוה as the lone exception in Job's case, countering the contention of Eliphaz that there is no one who can help Job. Such divine mediation by a subordinate deity may be related to "the Mesopotamian belief in a personal god who looked after the interest of his mortal client in the divine assembly."[494] If this is an Israelite parallel conception to that belief, it may lend support to Eichrodt's suggestion of מלאך יהוה as divine mediator, since that figure is cast as Yahweh's divine vice-regent.[495] Given the human appearance of the מלאך יהוה in pre-exilic texts, the next passage for consideration is intriguing.

Job 4:12-17 provides the backdrop to 4:18 cited above. Though it does not overtly reference divine pluralities, it deserves attention with respect to the theme of the unnamed vice-regent we have seen in several

---

[491] Clines, *Job 1-20*, 138.
[492] See D. J. A. Clines, "Job 5, 1-8: A New Exegesis," *Bib* 62 (1981): 185-194.
[493] W. Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (trans. J. Baker; vol . II; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 23-29.
[494] Marvin Pope, *Job* (AB 15; New York: Doubleday, 1965), 219.
[495] Recall the earlier discussion on the מלאך יהוה in the Baal vice regent role and Baal's intercessory activity.

poetic passages. The passage is quite suggestive of the appearance of an anthropomorphized Yahweh, who speaks of the divine vice-regent. The entire pericope (Job 4:12-21) follows:

Job 4:12-21

12 וְאֵלַי דָּבָר יְגֻנָּב וַתִּקַּח אָזְנִי שֵׁמֶץ מֶנְהוּ׃ 13 בִּשְׂעִפִּים מֵחֶזְיֹנוֹת לָיְלָה
בִּנְפֹל תַּרְדֵּמָה עַל־אֲנָשִׁים׃ 14 פַּחַד קְרָאַנִי וּרְעָדָה וְרֹב עַצְמוֹתַי הִפְחִיד׃
15 וְרוּחַ עַל־פָּנַי יַחֲלֹף תְּסַמֵּר שַׂעֲרַת בְּשָׂרִי׃ 16 יַעֲמֹד וְלֹא־אַכִּיר
מַרְאֵהוּ תְּמוּנָה לְנֶגֶד עֵינָי דְּמָמָה וָקוֹל אֶשְׁמָע׃ 17 הַאֱנוֹשׁ מֵאֱלוֹהַּ יִצְדָּק
אִם מֵעֹשֵׂהוּ יִטְהַר־גָּבֶר׃ 18 הֵן בַּעֲבָדָיו לֹא יַאֲמִין וּבְמַלְאָכָיו יָשִׂים תָּהֳלָה׃
19 אַף שֹׁכְנֵי בָתֵּי־חֹמֶר אֲשֶׁר־בֶּעָפָר יְסוֹדָם יְדַכְּאוּם לִפְנֵי־עָשׁ׃
20 מִבֹּקֶר לָעֶרֶב יֻכַּתּוּ מִבְּלִי מֵשִׂים לָנֶצַח יֹאבֵדוּ׃ 21 הֲלֹא־נִסַּע יִתְרָם בָּם
יָמוּתוּ וְלֹא בְחָכְמָה׃

12 A word came to me in stealth; My ear caught a whisper of it. 13 In thought-filled visions of the night, When deep sleep falls on men, 14 Fear and trembling came upon me, Causing all my bones to quake with fright. 15 A wind/spirit[496] passed by me, a whirlwind made my flesh quiver.[497] 16 It halted; its appearance was strange to me; A form loomed before my eyes; I heard a murmur, a voice, 17 "Can a man be righteous before God? Can man be pure in the sight of his Maker?[498] 18 If He cannot trust His own servants, And casts reproach on His angels, 19 How much less those who dwell in houses of clay, Whose origin is dust, Who are crushed like the moth, 20 Shattered between daybreak and evening, Perishing forever, unnoticed. 21 Their cord is pulled up and they die, and not with wisdom.[499]

Several items relevant to this study stand out in this passage. The knowledge that Eliphaz wants to impress upon Job did not come from a human source. Eliphaz claims here that his message for Job came to him personally (note the emphatic position of אלי) via a dramatic, frightening experience. Eliphaz's experience was auditory (דבר, קול, vv.12, 16), but he also had a vision (חזיון לילה, v. 16). The use of the word תרדמה implies some deep sleep or trance-like state that is elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible associated with divine revelation or intervention (Gen 2:21; 15:12). However, the term is also used of normal sleep that is not supernaturally induced (Prov 19:15; Judg 4:21; Jonah 1:5-6). Whatever the nature of the sleep, the vision experience terrified him, and it is in the description of the event that a supernatural context becomes apparent.

---

496 See the comments on רוח that follow.

497 Emending שׂערת to שׂערה for parallelism. In either case, the noun is paired with both masculine and feminine verb forms

498 On the translation of v. 17, see the textual and grammatical notes in Clines, *Job 1-20*, 112, nn. 17a-d).

499 The translation is that of Clines (Clines, *Job 1-20*, 111).

Several terms indicate that Eliphaz is describing a theophany.[500] In verse 15 both "wind" (רוח) and "whirlwind" (emending שׂערת to שׂערה in light of the parallelism) are elsewhere strong indications of divine presence.[501] That רוח here is not "spirit" (or the Holy Spirit) is indicated by gender. As Clines notes, when רוח is used as a masculine noun (note the verbs יחלף and יעמד in vv. 15 and 16), the word "always refers to a wind or breath."[502] In 1 Kgs 19:11 God speaks to Elijah out of a "great and strong wind (רוח)." In 2 Sam 22:11, Yahweh rides "upon the wings of the wind (רוח)." In the description of the theophany of Ezek 1:4, we read of the divine appearance in "the wind (רוח) of a storm (שׂערה)." Nahum 1:3 informs us that God's way is in "storm and whirlwind (בסופה ובשׂערה)." The other references in Job (38:1; 40:6) where Yahweh speaks from the "whirlwind" (סערה) also provide important context for Eliphaz's experience.

What distinguishes Job 4:15ff. from other references in the book to God speaking from the "wind" and "whirlwind" is that, like many other theophanic passages already noted in this study, the speaker (ostensibly Yahweh himself) is described in anthropomorphized terms. The figure is described as "standing" (יעמד), which is technical vocabulary for the divine council.[503] Interpreting עמד here as a stock council expression is sustained by the reference to מלאכים in 4:18, that verse's overlap with 15:8 and 15:15, and the theophanic language noted above. A divine council context for this vision and this figure is not only plausible, but is likely. Eliphaz recalls seeing the figure's form (תמונה) "looming before my eyes," meaning the figure was not invisible, but had some sort of discernible profile. The shape was unrecognizable, though, as Eliphaz reports not being able to make out the figure's appearance (לא־אכיר מראהו). This is typical of language that is intended to convey that the experiencer witnesses an appearance (תמונה) of God himself. Clines notes in this regard:

> Strikingly, תמונה always refers to God or to some representation of God: in Num 12:8 Yahweh says that with Moses he speaks "mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and

[500] Clines, *Job 1-20*, 130.
[501] The references that follow were noted in Clines, *Job 1-20*, 130.
[502] Clines, *Job 1-20*, 111, note 15a. Other verses where רוח is masculine are Job 1:19; 41:8 [16]; Exod 10:13; Num 5:14; Eccl 1:6; 3:19). Clines also notes that the Holy Spirit is referred to only once in Job (32:8), where רוח occurs in parallel to נשמת שׁדי.
[503] Mullen, *Divine Council*, 230-232; Cross, "The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah," 274, n. 3.

he beholds the form of Yahweh (תמונה יהוה)." This is a privilege reserved for Moses; Israel at Horeb "heard the sound of words, but saw no form (תמונה); there was only a voice" (Deut 4:12; cf. 4:15). In Ps 17:15 the "form" (תמונה) of Yahweh is parallel with his "face" (פנים). Elsewhere תמונה refers to representations of God (Exod 20:4; Deut 4:16, 23, 25; 5:8). Thus Eliphaz is claiming that he has both seen (v.16) and heard (vv. 15,17) God.[504]

If indeed the writer has Eliphaz presenting the truth to Job, the pessimism with which he speaks of appealing to the divine council is quite understandable. Job's suffering has been decreed by God, and no representative of the council at any level may overturn it. The speaker in fact confronts any notion that a man can challenge God's decisions on the matter. The issue is not Job's guilt or innocence, but the divine will.

Who is this unidentified speaker? It could be argued by implication that elsewhere when Yahweh is anthropomorphized, the מלאך יהוה fills that role. But is there any instance where the מלאך יהוה is present in the divine council? This is in fact the case in Zech 3:1-7.

5.3 *The Divine Council Scene in Zechariah 3:1-7*

All the major scholarly works on the divine council agree that Zech 3:1-7 is a divine council scene. The unanimity is due primarily to the passage's similarity to Job 1-2, where the *śaṭan* is also present.[505] As was the case with Job 1-2, Zech 3:1-7 shows evidence of some development in the divine council conception, but not a downgrading of the concept. This text's importance for the present study relates to its presentation of the activity of the council and the appearance of the pre-exilic divine vice-regent figure, the מלאך יהוה, the central character in the subsequent two powers controversy. Discussion here will focus on the council proceedings due to their implications for divine plurality and the earlier debate on Psalm 82.

Zech 3:1-7

1 וַיַּרְאֵנִי אֶת־יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה וְהַשָּׂטָן עֹמֵד
עַל־יְמִינוֹ לְשִׂטְנוֹ׃ 2 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־הַשָּׂטָן יִגְעַר יְהוָה בְּךָ הַשָּׂטָן וְיִגְעַר יְהוָה
בְּךָ הַבֹּחֵר בִּירוּשָׁלִָם הֲלוֹא זֶה אוּד מֻצָּל מֵאֵשׁ׃ 3 וִיהוֹשֻׁעַ הָיָה לָבֻשׁ בְּגָדִים
צוֹאִים וְעֹמֵד לִפְנֵי הַמַּלְאָךְ׃ 4 וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לְפָנָיו לֵאמֹר
הָסִירוּ הַבְּגָדִים הַצֹּאִים מֵעָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רְאֵה הֶעֱבַרְתִּי מֵעָלֶיךָ עֲוֺנֶךָ
וְהַלְבֵּשׁ אֹתְךָ מַחֲלָצוֹת׃ 5 וָאֹמַר יָשִׂימוּ צָנִיף טָהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיָּשִׂימוּ הַצָּנִיף
הַטָּהוֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיַּלְבִּשֻׁהוּ בְּגָדִים וּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה עֹמֵד׃ 6 וַיָּעַד מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה

[504] Clines, *Job 1-20*, 131.
[505] Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 182-183.

בִּיהוֹשֻׁעַ לֵאמֹר׃ 7 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־בִּדְרָכַי תֵּלֵךְ וְאִם אֶת־מִשְׁמַרְתִּי
תִשְׁמֹר וְגַם־אַתָּה תָּדִין אֶת־בֵּיתִי וְגַם תִּשְׁמֹר אֶת־חֲצֵרָי וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מַהְלְכִים
בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה׃

1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh, and the *śaṭan* standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 Yahweh said to the *śaṭan*, "Yahweh rebukes you, O *śaṭan*! Yahweh, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebukes you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" 3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 And He said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you." 5 Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of Yahweh stood by. 6 The angel of Yahweh gave this charge to Joshua: 7 "This is what Yahweh Almighty says: `If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here.'"

Before offering my own suggestions on the scene, it is useful to describe the consensus interpretation. The passage begins with Yahweh[506] showing the prophet the vision of Joshua the high priest standing before the מלאך יהוה, with the *śaṭan* standing to Joshua's right, ready to accuse him. That the *śaṭan* is in fact at Joshua's right and not to the right of the מלאך יהוה can be inferred from Ps 109:6, where the *śaṭan* is clearly positioned to the right of the accused.[507] The *śaṭan* is rebuked by Yahweh himself in the third person, who either enters the scene now with the prophet Zechariah, or issues the rebuke at a distance. This rebuke is followed by the absolution of the apostasy of the nation of Israel, represented by the high priest's filthy garments (3:2-4). The clause that begins verse 4 (וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לְפָנָיו) is typically understood as Yahweh commanding the unseen council members or (more likely) attendants to remove Joshua's filthy garments and replace them with "rich garments" (מחלצות). The subsequent clause (וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו רְאֵה הֶעֱבַרְתִּי מֵעָלֶיךָ עֲוֺנֶךָ) is also taken as though Yahweh is the speaker. In verse five the prophet addresses the heavenly attendants and directs them to place a clean turban on Joshua's head, and they comply while the מלאך יהוה stands by. The מלאך יהוה then admonishes Joshua, speaking in the first person as Yahweh, the One whom he represents. The description of the admonition of the מלאך יהוה is reminiscent of many pre-exilic instances where the מלאך יהוה acts as the extension of Yahweh. Joshua's

[506] See Zech 2:1 (Hebrew) and Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 179-180.

reward for obedience from this time forth will be entry to the divine council itself (וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ מַהְלְכִים בֵּין הָעֹמְדִים הָאֵלֶּה).

This portrayal of the council proceedings concerning Joshua the high priest is certainly coherent, but in my mind a key detail is missed that calls for a different analysis. The assumption guiding the consensus view is that it is Yahweh who is presiding over the proceedings, but this conclusion goes beyond the wording of the text and the larger context.

As with passages in Job, commentators have accurately pointed out that עמד is "the most common word in Hebrew literature for reflecting the technical procedures of participating in the Court. Just as people appear before the king and enter his court . . . so heavenly figures are admitted to the assembly over which Yahweh presides."[508] In this case עמד is an important clue to understanding the vision, as it occurs six times in these seven verses.[509] But as Joshua the high priest stands condemned in the divine courtroom, it is not Yahweh that he is standing before (עמד לפני) in the position and posture of the accused—it is the מלאך יהוה. In fact, Joshua is described as standing לפני (ה)מלאך (יהוה) twice (vv. 1,3).[510]

In order to discern the importance of this unusual circumstance, it is necessary to understand the significance of the phrase לפני יהוה (and so לפני מלאך יהוה). לפני of course is formed via the noun פנים in construct and prefixed with the preposition ל. Though the meaning of לפני can be abstract,[511] a very common usage bears the nuance "in the presence of, before" a person or object.[512] The phrase לפני יהוה often takes on a technical meaning that implies some kind of localized representation of YHWH's presence.[513] פנים without prefixed ל is the general word for "face" and is often used in the broad sense of one's presence or

---

[507] In Ps 109:6, however, שׂטן lacks the article. Meyers (quoting Hurvitz, "Date of the Prose Tale of Job," 19) contends that the absence of the article does not weaken the familiar image of the accuser role (Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 184).
[508] Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 182-183.
[509] Ibid., 182; Thomas Pola, "Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3," in *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era* (ed. Rainer Albertz and Bob Becking; STAR 5; Van Gorcum, 2003), 158.
[510] The full phrase, לפני מלאך יהוה, is used in 3:1, whereas 3:3 reads לפני המלאך. That the מלאך יהוה is in view in 3:3 is indicated by the article as well as context.
[511] Judith Romney Wegner, "Coming Before the LORD: לפני יהוה and the Exclusion of Women from the Divine Presence," in *Hesed Ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of Ernest S. Frerichs* (ed. Jodi Magness and Seymour Gitin; BJS 320; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 82.
[512] Mervyn D. Fowler, "The Meaning of *lipnê YHWH* in the Old Testament," *ZAW* 99 (1987): 384.

person in biblical Hebrew. For example, in 2 Sam 17:11 Absalom receives counsel from Hushai: "Therefore I counsel that all Israel be gathered to you, from Dan to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea for multitude, and that you go into battle personally (פניך)." C.L. Seow adds that "*pānîm* is closely associated with divine presence, which is at times symbolized by the presence of cultic objects."[514] In many instances in the Hebrew Bible this representation was the ark of the covenant. For example, at the procession bringing the ark back to Jerusalem David "danced before Yahweh" (2 Sam 6:5ff.). Hezekiah "prayed before Yahweh" as he faced the cherubim in the temple (Isa 37:14-20; 2 Kgs 19:14-19). The Israelites passed "before Yahweh" when they crossed the Jordan River bearing the ark of the covenant (Num 32:21ff.).

There are also many instances where a cultic object is not in view, and פנים speaks of direct contact with the presence of Yahweh, which at times meant being "face to face" with an anthropomorphic representation.[515] Seow comments that "in quite a number of biblical texts the *pānîm* of YHWH is YHWH's hypostatic Presence. Thus it serves the same function as *Šem* (Name) in the Dtr theology, *Kābôd* (Glory) in the Priestly tradition, and *Shekinah* in later Jewish writings."[516] In Exod 33:14-16 Yahweh tells Moses (with whom he spoke פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים) that "My presence (lit., "face") will go with you and I will give you rest" (פָּנַי יֵלֵכוּ וַהֲנִחֹתִי לָךְ). Speiser points out that phrases that juxtapose פנים with the verb הלך do not merely mean "to go before" or "to lead" since Yahweh promises he will be "with" the people, the idea being the immanence of Yahweh among the Israelites as a whole.[517] Indeed, the very function of the hypostasis was so that Yahweh could be simultaneously transcendent and immanent.[518]

---

513 Ibid., 384. Fowler's article also details how the phrase can amount to general affirmation of Yahweh's omnipresence, the existence of a cult center, or refer to Yahweh's "estimation" of something.
514 C.L. Seow, "Face," *DDD,* 323.
515 The notion of seeing God's face or speaking to Yahweh "face to face" is not uncommon in the Hebrew Bible, despite the tradition that no one could see the face of God and live (Exod 33:10). For the idiom of seeing or speaking to God פנים אל־פנים or פנים בפנים, see Gen 32:30; Exod. 33:11; Deut 5:4; 34:10; Judg 6:22; Ezek 20:35. For direct conversation with Yahweh in human form, the most notable passage is Gen 18-19 (cf. 18:22). These situations are rare, since the anthropomorphized Yahweh is typically the מלאך יהוה.
516 Seow, "Face," 322.
517 E.A. Speiser, "The Biblical Idiom *pānîm hōlekīm*," in *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Volume of the Jewish Quarterly Review* (Philadelphia: Jewish Quarterly Review, 1967), 516. LXX takes פנים in this context to refer to God "in person" and so reads αὐτὸς σὺ.
518 Seow, "Face," 322.

In Gen 32:25 Jacob wrestled with a "man" until dawn. Although the reader is not told specifically how Jacob reached the conclusion, Jacob subsequently considers his opponent a divine being (Gen 32:31) and so names the place of the incident פניאל declaring, "I have seen God/ a god (אלהים) face to face" (רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים). The implication is that the "man" was a deity figure, or given the idiomatic פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים, perhaps the God of Israel himself. The writer of Hosea, reflecting on this incident, appears to understand Jacob's opponent to be the familiar angel who represents Yahweh.[519]

Consider the overlap of the following verses, beginning with Exod 23:20-23, the text where Yahweh reveals that his Name resides in the angel he is sending before Israel—the text at the heart of the "two powers in heaven" controversy. The references to the enemies in the land are identical in terms of the nations named, and bind the passages together.

> <u>Exod 23:20-23 (Yahweh speaking to Moses)</u>
>
> 20 "See, I am sending an angel (מלאך) ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring (וְלַהֲבִיאֲךָ) you to the place I have prepared. 21 Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name (שְׁמִי) is in him. 22 If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you. 23 My angel (מלאך) will go (יֵלֵךְ) ahead of you and bring you (וֶהֱבִיאֲךָ) into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out.

In this passage, it is the angel of Yahweh who will go (יֵלֵךְ) ahead of Israel and who will bring (וֶהֱבִיאֲךָ) Israel into the land.

> <u>Exod 32:34 (Yahweh speaking to Moses)</u>
>
> Now go, lead the people to the place I spoke of, and my angel (מלאכי) will go (יֵלֵךְ) before you. However, when the time comes for me to punish, I will punish them for their sin" (וּבְיוֹם פָּקְדִי וּפָקַדְתִּי עֲלֵיהֶם חַטָּאתָם).

Like Exod 23:20-23, the angel will go (יֵלֵךְ) ahead of Israel.

> <u>Exod 33:1-3, 12-15 (Yahweh speaking to Moses)</u>

---

[519] See pages 56-57 of this study.

> 1 Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' 2 I will send an angel (מלאך) before you and I will drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 3 Go up to the land flowing with milk and honey. But I will not go with you, because you are a stiff-necked people and I might destroy you on the way." . . . 12 Moses said to Yahweh, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' 13 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people." 14 The LORD replied, "My Presence (פני) will go (יֵלֵכוּ) with you, and I will give you rest." 15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence (פניך) does not go (הֹלְכִים) with us, do not send us up from here.

Once again it is the angel who is sent ahead of Israel (33:2), but it is the Presence (פניך) that will go (יֵלֵכוּ) and bring (וֶהֱבִיאֲךָ) Israel into the land.

> <u>Deut 7:1</u>
>
> When Yahweh your God brings (יְבִיאֲךָ) you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you . . .

Here Yahweh himself brings (יְבִיאֲךָ) Israel to the land, and the parallel is unmistakable in view of the list of nations. The connection between the Presence and the מלאך יהוה is most explicitly described in a text roughly contemporaneous with Zechariah 3:

> <u>Isa 63:9 (speaking of Yahweh)</u>
>
> In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence (מלאך פניו) saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old.

The MT of Isa 63:9 is supported by 1QIsa^{a}, but LXX disagrees, interpreting פניו as Yahweh himself, as in Exod 33:14 (ἐκ πάσης θλίψεως οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος ἀλλ᾽ αὐτὸς κύριος ἔσωσεν αὐτοὺς).

With these observations as backdrop, the scene of Zech 3:1-7 provides an intriguing interplay of Yahweh and his vice-regent presiding together in council. My own suggestion is that the מלאך יהוה is indeed seated on a throne presiding over the heavenly court in this scene. I would agree with the consensus that

Yahweh either issues his rebuke of the *śāṭan* from a distance, or enters the scene in verse 2.[520] However, since Joshua is standing before the מלאך יהוה in verse 3b, it is more natural that the subject of the clause that begins verse 4 (וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֹמְדִים לְפָנָיו) is the מלאך יהוה, not Yahweh.[521] I suggest translating verse 4a as, "And the מלאך יהוה answered and said to those who were standing before him . . ." This would make good contextual sense as well, since it would have another occurrence of עמד capturing the same picture as Joshua; that is, the heavenly attendants stand before the seated מלאך יהוה as does the accused. That the מלאך יהוה is the seated presiding deity is also indicated in verse 5 where, immediately after the clean turban and clothing is placed on Joshua, we find that the מלאך יהוה had stood (repointing עֹמֵד to עָמַד).[522]

At this point it may seem shocking to have the מלאך יהוה announce to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you," but this is a possibility if the מלאך יהוה is the subject of the clause that begins verse 4. One must recall that the מלאך יהוה does not speak for himself. In verses 6-7 the מלאך יהוה speaks for Yahweh and refers to Him deferentially as יהוה צבאות. To say that the מלאך יהוה is the one pronouncing Joshua's forgiveness via the first person in verse 4 is no usurpation of sovereignty; it is to act as the vice-regent normally does, as the mouthpiece of Yahweh. There is nothing inherently surprising, in lieu of Yahweh's "absence" in the company of the prophet, that the מלאך יהוה, the

---

[520] Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 179-183. Throughout chapters 1 and 2 of Zechariah, Yahweh, the מלאך יהוה, and another angel (if indeed "the angel" of 1:9, 13, 14, 19; 2:3 is actually distinct from the מלאך יהוה of 1:11, 12) are talking with each other and the prophet. Zec 3:1's statement, "Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Yahweh" eliminates the מלאך יהוה as the one showing Zechariah the scene in the council setting. The one revealing the scene to the prophet is either the angel of chapter 1, if indeed that angel and the מלאך יהוה are distinct, or Yahweh himself in the event they are the same (see the note on the "man" of 1:8 in Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 110). Elsewhere in Zechariah Yahweh does speak directly to the prophet (11:13), and in chapter 1 the same is conceivable in light of the phrase "the word of Yahweh came to me" (1:1, 7). Meyers and Meyers point to 2:8 as implying Yahweh is the speaker, but the reference to the entity "touching" the prophet would require Yahweh in human form, as though the word that came to Zechariah was corporeal (cp. Jer 1:1 with Jer 1:9 for the "word" of Yahweh as physical). Taking Zec 1:1, 7 with 2:8 then offers the possibility that one of the figures in these early chapters of Zechariah is the embodied Yahweh, which is typically the role of the מלאך יהוה.

[521] Vanderkam apparently understands the subject of the verb to be the angel as well (James C. Vanderkam, "Joshua the high Priest and the Interpretation of Zechariah 3," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 556.

[522] The LXX translator apparently did not take the text as a participle either, given the use of the perfect (εἱστήκει).

being "who stands at the head of the entourage of the divine council,"[523] is the one before whom Joshua stands, and who will charge Joshua to obey.

If this portrayal is the more accurate of the two options, the implications are noteworthy. There is obvious divine duality in a very late canonical text. The same "theology of interchangeability" that characterized pre-exilic texts and that led Second Temple scholars to posit a second power in heaven, is present in an obviously post-exilic text, Zech 3:1-7. When Joshua the high priest stands לפני מלאך יהוה, it is tantamount to standing לפני יהוה. To be sure, my suggested reconstruction is not needed for divine plurality in the passage, since the presence of the מלאך יהוה, the being in whom Yahweh's Name dwells, is undeniable. My suggestion merely heightens the second power in the heavenly court scene. Second, since the מלאך יהוה acts as Yahweh's representative in the scene no matter how the roles are parsed, the effect is that Yahweh's will is done—Joshua (the nation) is forgiven and re-commissioned. Technically the מלאך יהוה is at once the person wronged (the plaintiff) and the judge, and Yahweh's role is advocate or defender of Joshua, the one who clears Joshua of his crimes via absolution. Though Yahweh and the מלאך יהוה can be separated, the two act as one, as is the case in so many pre-exilic examples. Yahweh is never eclipsed by the מלאך יהוה; the latter functions as the former because the Name is present within him. In this way, Yahweh can be both judge and accuser in Psalm 82 as well, via the presence of an unnamed plaintiff. It seems the only difference between Psalm 82, Psalm 89's cloud witness, the figure of Job 4:12-19, and Zech 3:1-7 is that the second actor is identified only in Zech 3:1-7.

Two other items in Zech 3:1-7 deserve comment. First, it is clear that the prophet Zechariah, like Adam, Enoch, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Micaiah ben Imlah, gains access to the throne council room to witness the divine council in session.[524] This is apparently an important rite of passage for prophets, and

---

[523] Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 183.

[524] See Job 15:7-8; Gen 5:22 (cf. האלהים and the Enoch tradition), Exod 24, Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 23, Daniel 7, and 1 Kings 22. See also Pola, "Form and Meaning," 160, 164; Meyers and Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*, 194-198. Many commentators consider the scene of 1 Kings 22 as intentionally contrived by the prophet, but the overwhelming majority of the works on the divine council cited in Chapter One's introduction to this study include the description as a heavenly throne room scene.

Zechariah has his moment, like the prophets of old, “among the courtiers of God.”[525] Second, the promise and invitation of Yahweh in verses 6-7, spoken through the מלאך יהוה, that Joshua would be given entry and membership in the divine council is perhaps the biblical precedent for this feature of Second Temple religion. The idea that the faithful could join the divine council without occupying the office of prophet is most explicitly articulated in Qumran sectarian texts, particularly the *Shabbat Shirot*, but is found elsewhere, such as Enoch. In this regard as well Zech 3:1-7 would evidence an innovation in the divine council theology.

5.4 *Divine Council Terms and Motifs Elsewhere in Zechariah*

The apocalyptic vision of Zechariah 12-14 also contains instances of divine council vocabulary. Aside from numerous references to מלאכים (4:1ff.; 5:5ff.; 6:4-5) the familiar קדשים appear in Zech 14:5.

Zech 14:5

וְנַסְתֶּם גֵּיא־הָרַי כִּי־יַגִּיעַ גֵּי־הָרִים אֶל־אָצַל וְנַסְתֶּם כַּאֲשֶׁר נַסְתֶּם מִפְּנֵי הָרַעַשׁ
בִּימֵי עֻזִּיָּה מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וּבָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי כָּל־קְדֹשִׁים עִמָּךְ׃

5 And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal. You shall flee, like you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and Yahweh my God shall come, (and) all the holy ones with you."

This verse and the four verses that precede it have a number of interpretational problems that are usually solved by small emendations of the text.[526] It is not the purpose here to catalogue these issues and address them, only to point out the terminology associated with the divine council. Whatever the textual solutions, this passage was understood by the Qumran sect (cf. 1QM) as indicating the presence of divine beings in the final apocalyptic war. Another text from the prophets that puts forth the same thought is Joel 3:11 (4:11, Hebrew).

עוּשׁוּ וָבֹאוּ כָל־הַגּוֹיִם מִסָּבִיב וְנִקְבָּצוּ שָׁמָּה הַנְחַת יְהוָה גִּבּוֹרֶיךָ׃

Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, O Yahweh!

Finally, the curious text of Zech 12:8 could be (and was in Second Temple contexts) considered to depict divine plurality within the council.

Zech 12:8

---

[525] Vanderkam, “Joshua in Zechariah 3,” 560. See also Nissen, “Prophets and the Divine Council,” and Kingsbury, "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh.”

[526] Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of the Watchers, and Apocalyptic* (*OtSt* 35; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 226-228.

8 בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יָגֵן יְהוָה בְּעַד יוֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַםִ וְהָיָה הַנִּכְשָׁל בָּהֶם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא כְּדָוִיד וּבֵית דָּוִיד כֵּאלֹהִים כְּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה לִפְנֵיהֶם׃

In that day Yahweh shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David (shall be) as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.

Our interest here is not focused on what the writer meant by prophesying that at the Day of Yahweh the house of David will be "like (a) God." More significant is the appositional relationship between כֵּאלֹהִים and כְּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה in the line וּבֵית דָּוִיד כֵּאלֹהִים כְּמַלְאַךְ יְהוָה לִפְנֵיהֶם.[527] Like the parallelism in Hos 12:4-5 (Hebrew), this text identifies the מלאך יהוה as a second-tier deity and, as Yahweh's special agent, marks him once again as the divine vice-regent about whom Jewish thinkers and rabbis in later periods would become so fascinated and concerned. One wonders how such a potentially uncomfortable text could have escaped the attention of the exilic and post-exilic redactors, whose intolerant monotheism is presumed. This study suggests that the second power in heaven with its divine duality was acceptable in this stage of Israelite religion and later eras because Israel's faith was monolatrous.

5.5 *Summation*

This chapter had a twofold emphasis. Its first goal was demonstrating the pervasive presence of divine council terminology and motifs in canonical texts that most scholars agree were either composed or substantially redacted during the exilic period or afterward. It also asked the reader to consider the need for the consensus view to defend the position that passages dating to these eras which contain references to divine plurality do so only as a rhetorical device to convey intolerant monotheism. If intolerant monotheism was characteristic of official Israelite religion of the day, as the majority of scholarship contends, then the burden of proof is upon that view to demonstrate that *many* texts that reflect divine plurality or heavenly vice regency do so for the sake of monotheistic rhetoric. The consensus case must be built on more than Psalm 82, which, in the view of this writer, lacks monotheistic rhetoric as well. The chapter therefore charges the consensus view with a lack of consistency in this regard. It is more coherent to posit that Israel's religion after the exile reflects the monolatry

[527] The JPS Tanakh translates, "the house of David [will be] like a divine being—like an angel of the Lord—at their head."

of the pre-exilic era, not a militant monotheism that rejected the reality of the lesser gods of the nations. As the study moves into the heart of the Second Temple period, the divine council is no less conspicuous.

Chapter Six

The Divine Council in the Book of Daniel

The two previous chapters argued that the editorial work of the redactors of the exilic and early post-exilic eras was focused neither on articulating nor enforcing an exclusivistic monotheism and that, in point of fact, the monolatrous worldview of pre-exilic Israel was still in force, complete with a divine council of gods and a divine vice-regent under the headship of Yahweh. As we shall now see, this worldview remains unaltered in the mid-second century B.C.E. canonical book of Daniel.

Perhaps no canonical book led to more debate on the nature and number of the powers in the heavenly host. As Segal has demonstrated, the contents of Daniel expressed divine plurality so explicitly that discussion of Daniel 7 had to be suppressed by the rabbis.[528] In view of the fascination with Daniel in non-canonical Second Temple texts, including the sectarian material from Qumran, it should come as no surprise that some of the clearest and boldest references to plural אלהים and exalted divine mediators (as explanations of the Son of Man figure in Daniel 7) are found in these very late biblical texts in contexts that allude to material in Daniel. As has been noted already, these references to plural אלהים seem so aberrant that most contemporary scholars feel compelled to relegate council members to the status of angels. If we reject the idea that the divine council has been diluted in this manner, however, the anomalous becomes the anticipated.

This chapter argues that the contents of the book of Daniel created no religious trepidation among Second Temple Jews, as would be logically expected within the context of a zealous, intolerant monotheism. Daniel represents continuity and expansion of the pre-exilic Israelite divine council and divine vice-regency in Judaism. The book's contents bear no resemblance to a religious outlook that presumably had long since seen the rejection of divine plurality.

6.1 *Preview and Approach*

---

[528] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 148-149.

If the goal of the religious power-holders and scribes from the time of Deutero-Isaiah onward was to eliminate or disguise the divine plurality of the council, it is shocking that the religious establishment would bestow canonical status upon a book that overtly describes multiple thrones in heaven and a divine vice-regent that bears an epithet of Yahweh. This chapter will utilize several lines of argument in demonstrating that the pre-exilic divine council of Israelite monolatry survived well into the second century B.C.E. An overview of these arguments will be followed by more substantive analysis.

First, in the divine council scene of Dan 7:9ff., Yahweh-El is not depicted as the lone heavenly authority. There is more than one throne *in heaven*, and members of the divine council occupy these thrones. This observation is certainly not new, but it must be understood in light of the Yahweh-El merger that had taken place in Israelite religion centuries before Daniel's composition. Daniel 7 also distinguishes the high god who presides over the council, Yahweh-El, from a second figure who bears Yahweh's title of "Cloud Rider"—significantly, the only time in the Hebrew Bible where another entity receives a Yahweh attribution.[529] As the later rabbis understood quite clearly when confronting the two powers problem, Daniel 7 depicts a second power in heaven who is given everlasting dominion and power. The fact that Daniel 7 follows the flow of the Baal Cycle so closely allows us to draw the conclusion that Daniel 7 evinces the pre-exilic vice regency structure of the divine council in unmistakable terms. Following this literary relationship to the Baal Cycle and its descriptions of the vice-regency and princely status of Baal, it is coherent to argue that this second figure in Daniel 7 is Yahweh-El's vice-regent, the "king of the gods" of the council, the "prince of the host" and "prince of princes." Daniel 7 is thus quite consistent with the bureaucracy described earlier in this study.

Second, scholars of Israelite religion have tended to downplay or perhaps overlook the significance of the description of the bestowal of sovereignty over the Gentile nations to the second power in Daniel 7. By virtue of this grant of dominion from the high God, the second deity figure, the Son of Man, also receives authority over the second-tier בני־האלהים who govern the Gentile nations. As noted earlier in this study (Sections 3.4, 4.1) scholars have long recognized that this religious outlook is drawn from pre-exilic divine

[529] See the ensuing discussion with respect to this title.

council texts such as Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9.[530] It is significant in this regard that this second divine figure is not described as David or a member of the Davidic line. In fact, David and his dynasty are never mentioned in Daniel 7 or anywhere else in the book.[531] This conceptual vacuum undermines a messianic explanation for the second divine power.

Identifying the vice-regent as Michael is likewise negated. Michael is referred to as a "prince" (שׂר; Dan 10:21), the same terminology for those royal divine sons that govern geographic territory in the worldview of Deut 32:8-9 and Psalm 82. The fact that Michael is also called השׂר הגדול (Dan 12:1) does not mean that Michael is the lord of all the divine princes (and thus the second figure of Daniel 7) since השׂר הגדול is identified as Israel's prince in Dan 12:1, who is elsewhere described as merely *one of* the chief princes in Dan 10:13 (אַחַד הַשָּׂרִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים). This interplay of terms and the fact that there is more than one "chief prince" suggests that the terms "prince," "great prince," and "chief prince" could be used of various beings of the second-tier princely class of the heavenly hierarchy. Hence "chief prince" and "great prince" are synonyms referring to the single divine prince who governs Israel, but who is one of an undetermined number of chief princes.[532] In any event, the nomenclature tells us that Michael is merely a *member* of an exalted class of divine viceroys.[533] Michael is therefore not the single authority over the divine royal princes; he is not, in pre-exilic divine council terms, the "king of the gods." By definition there is only one "Prince of the princes" (שׂר שׂרים; Dan 8:25) or "Prince of the host" (שׂר־הצבא).[534] Michael therefore cannot be the second deity figure in Daniel 7, the vice-regent of Yahweh.[535] As this chapter demonstrates, the correlation of Daniel 7 with the Baal Cycle not only warrants this elimination of Michael as the vice-regent, but suggests an alternative identification noted earlier in this study.

---

[530] John J. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 374-375.
[531] Ibid., *Daniel*, 309.
[532] This is consistent with Second Temple texts where there is more than one archangel (See Chapter Eight). It should also be noted that the archangels of Second Temple texts are also referred to as Watchers, who are in turn equated with the divine royal sons, the בני־האלהים who govern the nations in the pre-exilic biblical worldview.
[533] The term "viceroys" is de Boer's ("The Counsellor," 49).
[534] Note again the correlation between Dan 8:25's שׂר־הצבא and Josh 5:14's שׂר־צבא־יהוה. The description of Daniel hearkens back to the divine vice-regent figure of the מלאך יהוה, not one of the divine geographic princes.
[535] Subsequent Second Temple and early rabbinic speculation as to the identity of the "Son of Man" included the idea that this figure was

The heavenly bureaucracy in the book of Daniel is consistent with the pre-exilic divine council and a religion of monolatry, but not with an imploded council and exclusivistic monotheism. It is difficult, if not impossible, to do justice to the use of the Baal Cycle and the hierarchical terminology for divine beings in Daniel 7 and simultaneously argue that the divine council of earlier Israelite religion has "collapsed." In keeping with the emphases of preceding chapters, predominant attention in this chapter will be paid to divine plurality and vice regency motifs as these lines of argument are developed in more detail. Toward that end, discussion will concentrate on the divine council scene of Daniel 7 and the references to heavenly beings ("princes") in Daniel 8-10.

6.2 *The Divine Council Meeting in Daniel 7*

Dan 7:1-14 contains a vision of four creatures described by the prophet Daniel in five distinct sections, each introduced by a formulaic expression containing the Aramaic phrase חזה הוית ("I watched") or וארו ("and behold"), often in tandem.[536] Dan 7:15-18 then supplies the interpretation, followed in turn by an elaboration (7:19-28) regarding the fourth beast. Although the entire chapter has relevance for the divine council context and overlaps with other passages in the Hebrew Bible that speak to the divine council, verses 9-14 are the focus here:

9 חָזֵה הֲוֵית עַד דִּי כָרְסָוָן רְמִיו וְעַתִּיק יוֹמִין יְתִב לְבוּשֵׁהּ כִּתְלַג חִוָּר
וּשְׂעַר רֵאשֵׁהּ כַּעֲמַר נְקֵא כָּרְסְיֵהּ שְׁבִיבִין דִּי־נוּר גַּלְגִּלּוֹהִי נוּר דָּלִק׃
10 נְהַר דִּי־נוּר נָגֵד וְנָפֵק מִן־קֳדָמוֹהִי אֶלֶף אַלְפַּיִם אַלְפִין יְשַׁמְּשׁוּנֵּהּ
וְרִבּוֹ רִבְבָן קָדָמוֹהִי יְקוּמוּן דִּינָא יְתִב וְסִפְרִין פְּתִיחוּ׃
11 חָזֵה הֲוֵית בֵּאדַיִן מִן־קָל מִלַּיָּא רַבְרְבָתָא דִּי קַרְנָא מְמַלֱּלָה חָזֵה הֲוֵית
עַד דִּי קְטִילַת חֵיוְתָא וְהוּבַד גִּשְׁמַהּ וִיהִיבַת לִיקֵדַת אֶשָּׁא׃
12 וּשְׁאָר חֵיוָתָא הֶעְדִּיו שָׁלְטָנְהוֹן וְאַרְכָה בְחַיִּין יְהִיבַת לְהוֹן עַד־זְמַן וְעִדָּן׃
13 חָזֵה הֲוֵית בְּחֶזְוֵי לֵילְיָא וַאֲרוּ עִם־עֲנָנֵי שְׁמַיָּא כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ אָתֵה הֲוָה
וְעַד־עַתִּיק יוֹמַיָּא מְטָה וּקְדָמוֹהִי הַקְרְבוּהִי׃ 14 וְלֵהּ יְהִיב שָׁלְטָן
וִיקָר וּמַלְכוּ וְכֹל עַמְמַיָּא אֻמַיָּא וְלִשָּׁנַיָּא לֵהּ יִפְלְחוּן שָׁלְטָנֵהּ שָׁלְטָן
עָלַם דִּי־לָא יֶעְדֵּה וּמַלְכוּתֵהּ דִּי־לָא תִתְחַבַּל׃ פ

Michael, but many Jewish teachers and writers found this explanation dissatisfying since Michael and the "Prince of the princes" are treated as separate characters in Daniel.

[536] John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 277.

9 As I looked on, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took His seat. His garment was like white snow, and the hair of His head was like lamb's wool. His throne was tongues of flame; its wheels were blazing fire. [10] A river of fire streamed forth before Him; thousands upon thousands served Him; myriads upon myriads attended Him; the court sat and the books were opened. [11] I looked on. Then, because of the arrogant words that the horn spoke, the beast was killed as I looked on; its body was destroyed and it was consigned to the flames. [12] The dominion of the other beasts was taken away, but an extension of life was given to them for a time and season. [13] As I looked on, in the night vision, one like a son of man came with the clouds of heaven; he reached the Ancient of Days and was presented to Him. [14] Dominion, glory, and kingship were given to him; all peoples and nations of every language must serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away, and his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.

The divine council setting of Daniel is not disputed among scholars, and is readily noted by J. Collins as belonging to "the tradition of biblical throne visions," and the "[widespread] idea of a heavenly court and council of divine beings."[537] A plurality of thrones (כָרְסָוָן) is clearly described in the vision. Contrary to the view that the plurality is incidental since only one individual is seated for judgment,[538] or the rabbinical interpretation that the plurality here denoted one throne for God and another for David,[539] the text plainly states that the council as a whole was collectively seated (דִינָא יְתִב) along with the Ancient of Days.

The setting of this meeting of the divine council is apparently in heaven, but these thrones are not located in clouds. This observation is important since it rules out the idea that the plurality refers to a second throne upon which the Son of Man (כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ), who receives everlasting dominion, was seated. This figure comes with the clouds later in the scene, after the court has already been seated. Although the later tradition that has the Son of Man occupying an elevated throne in heaven is logical, having been drawn on the basis of this figure's reception of everlasting rule, the text never states that this individual was seated. Rather, this figure is brought before the Ancient of Days (וּקְדָמוֹהִי הַקְרְבוּהִי), apparently by some of the "thousand thousands" who were "serving" the enthroned sovereign, who in turn bestowed everlasting dominion upon the Son of Man. This division of status among these heavenly beings is subtle, but significant. Just as in Ugaritic and earlier

[537] Ibid., 300, 303. Among other scholars of Israelite religion and commentators on Daniel who recognize Daniel 7 as a divine council scene (patterned in part on the Ugaritic council scene in *KTU* 1.2) are Mullen (*Divine Council*, 120-128), Christopher Rowland, "The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature," *JSJ* 10 (1979): 137-154; Matthew Black, "The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the 'Son of Man,'" in *Jews, Greeks, and Christians: Essays in Honor of W. D. Davies* (ed. Robert Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 57-73; J. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," *JTS* 9:2 (October, 1958): 227-242; P. Mosca, "Ugarit and Daniel 7: A Missing Link," *Bib* 67 (1986): 496-517.

[538] James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (ICC; Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1927), 296.

canonical Hebrew literature, there appears a hierarchy of an upper tier of beings (those seated in council), a servant class of heavenly beings, and a vice-regent who is given authority over the earth and, by extension, over all the sons of God who were thought to rule the earth in light of Ps 82:1,6 and Deut 4:19-20; 32:8-9.

In Dan 7:9 the Ancient of Days occupies a throne ablaze with fire (כָּרְסְיֵהּ שְׁבִיבִין דִּי־נוּר), a "standard element in biblical theophanies."[540] The "wheels" on the fiery throne were also blazing with fire (גַּלְגִּלּוֹהִי נוּר דָּלִק). The imagery here matches the description of Ezekiel's vision of the divine fiery chariot (Ezek 1:15-21; 10:2), so it is no surprise that the vast majority of scholars recognize that Daniel 7 draws its throne chariot motifs from Ezekiel's vision.[541]

That the visions of Ezekiel and Daniel both contain the same motifs is noteworthy, for they speak not only to an appearance of Yahweh, but of the divine council. In his study on fire in Canaanite and Israelite mythology, P. Miller notes that in the divine council scene that precedes the conflict of Baal with Yamm, the divine messengers of Yamm are fiery beings (*ʾištm*).[542] The association of fiery beings in a council scene is paralleled by Ezek 1:5, where the writer notes that four living creatures came out of the fire. Miller goes on to draw attention to the Israelite conception of Yahweh's divine warriors as bearing flaming swords in Eden to block the way back into the cosmic meeting place of the council. Likewise in Psalm 104, a psalm containing familiar divine council imagery, Yahweh's servants (מְשָׁרְתָיו - in parallel to מַלְאָכָיו) are referred to as "fiery flames (אֵשׁ לֹהֵט).[543]

Another striking overlap between Ezekiel 1 and Daniel 7 concerns the seated figures. In Ezekiel the throne chariot is associated with both El (אֵל־שַׁדַּי ; 1:24; cf. 10:5) and Yahweh (1:28; 10:4), evincing the expected Yahweh-El fusion by the time of the exile. The author of Daniel 7, following Ezekiel, assumed the same Yahweh-El correlation, thereby identifying Yahweh-El as the Ancient of Days. The Son of Man in the

---

539 This was the judgment of Rabbi Akiba (*b. Ḥag.* 14a; *b. Sanh.* 38b; cited in Collins, *Daniel*, 301, note 210).
540 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 302. See also Patrick D. Miller, "Fire in the Mythology of Canaan and Israel," *CBQ* 27 (1965): 257-258.
541 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 302. See also David Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (TSAJ 16; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1988), 77ff.
542 P. Miller, "Fire in the Mythology," 258.
543 Ibid., 260.

council scene is distinct from Yahweh-El, but is also associated with the Baal motif of the fiery chariot in the heavens.

The overlap with Ugaritic fire mythology and the chariot throne raises the question of the background of Daniel 7. This vision has long been considered to have originated outside the Hebrew Bible, and the debate over its religio-historical background has produced a plethora of positions, most of which are summarized succinctly by J. Collins.[544] This writer concurs with Collins' carefully argued rejections of an Iranian or Babylonian background for the visions in favor of a Canaanite provenance, specifically that of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle.[545] This is no idiosyncratic conclusion, for scholars prior to Collins' work had reached the same verdict.[546] Although a few scholars still oppose a Canaanite mythological background,[547] most would agree with Collins' comments that "[n]o other material now extant provides as good an explanation of the configuration of imagery in Daniel's dream,"[548] and "[t]he background of this scene lies in ancient traditions about the council of ʾEl, where the gods sit on their 'princely thrones.'"[549]

One of the major obstacles that has impeded consensus on this identification (or any identification of a foreign background) is the tendency among scholars to either expect or insist upon complete congruence between the presumed background material and the pious Judaism of Daniel's author. In this regard, Collins' comments are fitting:

> Appropriation of foreign motifs and thought patterns requires that some aspect of the presumed background be congenial to the author but does not require identity of outlook. . . . The use of imagery associated with Marduk or Baʿal may serve to make the claim that Yahweh, not the pagan deities, is the true deliverer. Whether pagan myths constitute the background to Daniel 7 must be judged by the light they throw on the text, not prejudged by modern assumptions about what is permissible for an ancient Jew. . . . No one suggests that the author of Daniel knew the Ugaritic texts directly or tried to reproduce the Baʿal cycle fully. . . . When a Canaanite myth is used in the Hebrew Bible, it is inevitably torn from its original context and given a new meaning.

---

544 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 280-294. H. Kvanvig enumerated nearly two dozen proposed answers in his study of the Son of Man tradition. See Helge S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and the Son of Man* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988).
545 Ibid., 286-291.
546 Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," 228; A. Bentzen, *Daniel* (HAT 19; 2d ed.; Tübingen: J. C. Mohr, 1952); idem, *King and Messiah* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952)
547 One of the more insistent objectors to the Ugaritic provenance is Arthur J. Ferch, *The Son of Man in Daniel 7* (AUSDDS 6; Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1979); idem, "Daniel 7 and Ugarit: A Reconsideration," *JBL* 99 (1980): 80-81. For Collins' response to Ferch, see John J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Genre and Mythic Allusions in Daniel," *JSOT* 21 (1981): 83-100.
548 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 291.
549 Ibid., 301 (Collins cites *KTU* 1.2.I:19-27). See also Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 98-99.

. . . Daniel 7 is not simply a reproduction of an older source, Canaanite or other. It is a new composition, which is not restricted to a single source for its imagery.[550]

These assertions are significant in the context of this study. One must not assume that a foreign motif such as the divine council would be inappropriate for a pious Second Temple Jew. The assumption that the belief in a feature of Canaanite religion—a divine council—is incompatible with exilic or post-exilic Jewish religion presumes both an inability on the part of biblical authors and scribes of those periods to adapt the concept in their own way.

The identification of a specifically Ugaritic provenance and a divine council milieu for Daniel 7 is based on a number of considerations. For example, Ugaritic El is referred to as *ʾab šnm*, which is translated by many scholars as "father of years" and considered a parallel to the meaning of "Ancient of Days."[551] This translation of the Ugaritic phrase has been disputed on the basis that the Ugaritic plural "years" is spelled *šnt*, not *šnm*. Defenders of the translation “father of years” counter in a threefold manner: (1) other nouns have variant plural spellings; (2) no other translation has proven coherent or free from similar problems; and (3) El is often portrayed at Ugarit as an aged god with a gray beard.[552] One could also add that, although the phrase in Daniel (עַתִּיק יוֹמִין) has no precise parallel elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, there are conceptual equivalents such as אֲבִיעַד ("eternal father"; Isa 9:5) and מֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם ("everlasting king"; Ps 24: 7,9). Isa 40:28’s אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם יְהוָה בּוֹרֵא קְצוֹת הָאָרֶץ ("the eternal God, the Lord, creator of the ends of the earth") is strikingly similar to the El epithet אֵל עֶלְיוֹן קֹנֵה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ ("El Elyon, creator of heaven and earth") in Gen 14:19, 22.

The argument for an Ugaritic provenance in Daniel 7 is dramatically strengthened by congruencies with the Baal Cycle. Shortly after the discovery of the Ugaritic texts, it was suggested that the fourth beast of Daniel's vision should be interpreted against the backdrop of the Ugaritic chaos monster *Lôtān* or *Liwyatān* /

[550] Ibid., 282, 286, 289.
[551] Ibid., 290. See also Mullen, *Divine Council*, 22-23; John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the* Sea, 161.
[552] John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 290, 301.

Lītānu,[553] described in the Baal cycle as *bṯn brḥ* ("the twisting serpent"), *bṯn ʿqtln* ("the coiled serpent"), and *šlyt d.šbʿt. rʾašm* ("*Šilyat* of the seven heads").[554] Although these suggestions are not exact matches to the terminology used in Daniel 7, the pervasiveness of the Ugaritic Leviathan tradition in the Hebrew Bible has led numerous scholars to conclude that it is in that light (correlated by other evidences for Ugaritic provenance) that Daniel 7 should be understood.[555] The divine council motif in Daniel 7 is also bolstered by the correlation with the divine council context of Ps 89:9-11, where Yahweh conquers the sea and its monster Rahab.

The battle of Baal and Yamm in *KTU* 1. 2.i and 1.2.iv probably offers the strongest set of conjunctions with Daniel 7. The specific context of this struggle is a banquet at El's abode, the traditional meeting place of El and his council. El is present at the feast with various members of his retinue, most significantly, Baal, who is depicted as standing beside El. Yamm sends messengers to El demanding that Baal be surrendered. El expresses a willingness to do so, a move that angers Baal. Soon thereafter, the story describes Yamm and Baal in combat with each other. When Baal appears to be losing the battle, the craftsman-god *Koṯar-wa-Ḫasis* fashions two clubs with which Baal is able to subdue and kill Yamm.

As M. Smith notes, the major focal point of the Baal cycle is "a competition among the gods for kingship."[556] In this myth, the defeat of Yamm ("sea") leads to Baal's declaration as king of the gods at the approval of El. Early studies of divine kingship among the gods at Ugarit typically saw this struggle as the deposition of El as the high god.[557] More recent scholarship, however, has refuted this view in favor of the bestowal of kingship upon Baal (including the title, "king of the gods") under the continuing authority of El.[558] Baal continues to appear in willing subordination to El as his vice-regent in Ugaritic texts outside the Baal Cycle, such as *KTU* 1.108: 2b-3a:[559]

ʾil yṯb bʿṯtrt	El sits enthroned with ʿAṯtart,
ʾil tpt bhd rʿy	El sits as judge with Haddu (Baal) his shepherd.

[553] The two forms derive from two different noun stems (*lawt* and *lawyat*). C. Uehlinger, "Leviathan," *DDD,* 511-515.
[554] *KTU* 1.5.i:2; *KTU* 1.5.i:1-3; *KTU* 1.3.iii:38 respectively. Compare Job 26:13 (נָחָשׁ בָּרִחַ) and Isa 27:1 (לִוְיָתָן נָחָשׁ עֲקַלָּתוֹן).
[555] John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 288-289.
[556] Mark S. Smith, "Interpreting the Baʿal Cycle," *UF* 18 (1986): 323.
[557] See Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts*; Oldenburg, *The Conflict Between El and Baal.*
[558] See C. L'Heureux, *Rank Among the Canaanite Gods: El, Baʿal, and the Rephaʾim*, 3-28; Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 22-45; Gibson, "The Theology of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle," 202-219 (esp. 207ff.).
[559] L'Heureux, *Rank Among the Canaanite* Gods, 43. See also A. J. Ferrara and Simon B. Parker, "Seating Arrangements at Divine Banquets," *UF* 4 (1972): 37-39. As Collins (*Daniel,* 287) adds, "There are also some possible references to El's appointment of Baʿal as king in fragmentary texts."

Likewise in Daniel 7, the defeat of the beasts which rise from the great sea (לְיַמָּא רַבָּא) results in kingship being granted to the Son of Man by El, the Ancient of Days. Though the human-like figure's dominion is everlasting, it is at the behest of the high God. The Son of Man is never considered to have usurped the authority of the Ancient of Days, either in Daniel or in later Second Temple literature.

Several explicit parallels between the Baal Cycle's account of Baal's struggle against Yamm and Dan 7:9-14 have led to the widespread endorsement of an Ugaritic provenance.[560] *KTU* 1.2.IV:7-9 reads:[561]

lrgmt lk lzbl bʿl	*Indeed I say to you, O Prince Baal*
tnt lrkb ʿrpt	*I repeat, O Charioteer/Rider of the Clouds;*
ht ʾibk bʿlm	*Now your enemy, O Baal*
ht ʾibk tmhṣ	*Now your enemy you will smite,*
ht tṣmt ṣrtk	*Now you must smite your foe.*
tqḥ mlk ʿlmk	*You must take your everlasting kingdom,*
drkt dt drdrk	*Your eternal dominion.*

Baal's stock epithet, "Rider of the Clouds,"[562] occurs in Dan 7:13:

עִם־עֲנָנֵי שְׁמַיָּא כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ אָתֵה הֲוָה וְעַד־עַתִּיק יוֹמַיָּא מְטָה ("one like a Son of Man was coming upon the clouds of heaven, and reached the Ancient of Days"). In his commentary on the book of Daniel, Montgomery argued that the choice of the preposition עם in the verse denoted a theological adjustment on the part of the author, who allegedly would not wish to convey the impression that the scene contains a second deity.[563] He has been followed in this argument by Hartman and DiLella in their commentary.[564] This presumed distinction has been shown to be imaginary. The inquiry of R.B.Y. Scott into the issue has demonstrated that the prepositions עם and ב are interchangeable and can mean "on" or "in," appealing to Dan 2:43 and 7:2 as examples.[565] J. Collins follows Scott, noting that "there is no basis for the distinction," since the act of coming

[560] John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 290.
[561] Collins cites this portion, but the translation is adapted from Wyatt (*Religious Texts*, 65). The speaker is Koṯar-wa-Ḫassis. Wyatt prefers the translation "charioteer" noting, "the chariot itself would be the clouds," but any distinction seems negligible.
[562] Wyatt, "The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm-God," 417-419.
[563] Montgomery, *Commentary on Daniel*, 303. Theodotion reads μετα, while LXX has ἐπί. The LXX reading, "he came *as* an Ancient of Days," removes any hint of a second divine being. J. Lust argues that the Son of Man was already identified with the Ancient of Days in the *Vorlage*, but the reading is "probably to be explained as a mechanical error (reading ὡς for ἕως, followed by grammatical hypercorrection) . . . [n]o confidence can be placed in the theological rationale when a simple mechanical explanation is possible" (J. Lust, "Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint," *ETL* 54 [1978]: 62-69; John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 311, 8).
[564] Louis F. Hartman and Alexander A. DiLella, *The Book of Daniel* (AB 23; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1978), 206.
[565] R. B.Y. Scott, "Behold He Cometh with Clouds," *NTS* 5 (1959): 127-132.

upon or in the clouds, or with an "entourage of clouds" denoted divine status in ancient Israel and Canaan.[566] As J. Emerton noted in his influential article on the subject, "The act of coming with the clouds suggests a theophany of Yahweh himself. If Daniel vii.13 does not refer to a divine being, then it is the only exception out of about seventy passages in the Old Testament."[567] The passages below bear this out, for all references to the one "riding" (רֹכֵב) upon clouds or through the heavens in the Hebrew Bible speak of the God of Israel.[568]

Ps 68:5 (Hebrew) exhorts the reader to "Extol the Rider upon the clouds by his name, Yah" (סֹלּוּ לָרֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת בְּיָהּ שְׁמוֹ) and to "(Sing praises) To Him who rides on the ancient high heavens" ([שִׁירוּ] לָרֹכֵב בִּשְׁמֵי שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם). In this passage Yahweh's titles are (ל)רֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת and לָרֹכֵב בִּשְׁמֵי שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם. Hebrew ערבות in the phrase לרֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת means "wilderness" or "desert," which would be an appropriate translation given the context, but the word is considered by scholars as evincing a linguistic *b/p* interchange of the Ugaritic phrase *rkb ʿrpt* ("Rider of the Clouds"), an epithet of Baal.[569] Later rabbis understood an interchange here as well.[570]

The argument for a *b/p* interchange is strengthened by the reference to Yahweh as לָרֹכֵב בִּשְׁמֵי שְׁמֵי־קֶדֶם and by explicit references to Yahweh in other texts as the "Cloud Rider" using heavenly terminology instead of ערבות. Isa 19:1 reads: "The oracle against Egypt: Behold, the LORD (יהוה) rides upon a swift cloud (עַל־עָב קַל)." Yahweh "makes the clouds his chariot"

---

566 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 311, 290.

567 J. Emerton, "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery," 231-232.

568 Some would argue that Elijah's transportation in 2 Kgs 2:11 would be an example of a human being (and hence not a divine being) riding upon the clouds. The phraseology is reminiscent, but there is clearly no divine epithet in the passage. The work of Galling is important here, for his study demonstrates that *rōkēb* denotes a charioteer, not merely a passenger (K. Galling, "Der Ehrenname Elisas und die Entruckung Elias," *ZTK* 53 [1956]: 129-148). Other studies have argued forcefully that the preposition בְּ in the context of the heavenly chariot "shows that God is the driver of the nubilous vehicle" (W. Herrmann, "Rider Upon the Clouds," *DDD,* 703-705, citing the work of S.E. Loewenstamm, "Grenzgebiete ugaritischer Sprach- und Stilvergleichung," *UF* 3 [1971]: 93-100). Hab 3:8 would affirm such an analysis, where תְּרְכַּב is used of both horses and chariots in parallel. Additionally, the context of 2 Kgs 2:11 informs us that Elijah is not to be considered divine, and is not associated with divine activity or rule, unlike the Son of Man figure in Daniel 7, who is given everlasting dominion over the earth.

569 See S. Moscati, *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* (2d ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1980), 25-26.

570 In the Talmud ערבות is mentioned as one of the heavens. *Ḥag.* 12b-13a reads: "ʿArabot is that in which there are Right and Judgment and Righteousness . . . the souls of the righteous and the spirits and the souls which are yet to be born . . . And from where do we derive that it is called heaven? From the word 'riding' which occurs in two passages. Here it is written: 'Extol him that rides upon

(הַשָּׂם־עָבִים רְכוּבוֹ) and "walks on the wings of the wind" (הַמְהַלֵּךְ עַל־כַּנְפֵי־רוּחַ) in Ps 104:1-3. Finally, in Deut 33:26, we read, "O Jeshurun, there is none like God (אל), who rides the heavens (רֹכֵב שָׁמַיִם) to help you; (who rides) the clouds (שְׁחָקִים) in His majesty."

Some scholars have disputed the *b/p* interchange.[571] In light of the contextual support in Psalm 68 for a meaning of "desert" for ערבות and the equally evident motif elsewhere that Yahweh was considered a deity who drove a heavenly throne chariot, scholars have concluded that the title (לרֹכֵב בָּעֲרָבוֹת) in Ps 68:5 is in fact a borrowing from Ugaritic Baal language, but that the epithet has been adapted to Yahweh's march from the South (Sinai) through the desert described in Hab 3:3; Judg 5:4-5; Deut 33: 23.[572] The effect would be a subtle distinguishing of Yahweh from Baal while simultaneously appropriating one of Baal's titles.

It is important to note that whereas Psalm 68 referenced Yahweh as the heavenly charioteer, Deut 33:26 utilizes the familiar Baal imagery to describe El. As was briefly noted above, the late canonical book of Ezekiel maintained this fusion (1:24, 28; cf. 10:4-5). Given that all scholars would assign a later date of composition to Daniel than Psalm 68, Deuteronomy 33, and Ezekiel 1, it can only be coherently argued that by the time of the book of Daniel, the El-Yahweh connection was assumed.

This fusion may seem obvious, but it has been overlooked in some treatments of Daniel 7's divine council scene and its central figures, the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man who comes to the Ancient of Days with the mythological cloud entourage. A few modern scholars argue that Daniel 7 is hearkening back to a formerly polytheistic division between El and Yahweh as divine Father and Son. These scholars argue that the imagery of authoritative sovereign and co-ruler evoked by the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man scene parallels the relationship between the El and Baal at Ugarit and has nothing to do with Yahweh. However, the fact that *both* the Ancient of Days and the Son of Man are associated with heavenly Baal throne-chariot imagery mars a strict El and Baal model for Daniel 7, and with it an El and Yahweh separation. The conspicuous

---

ʿArabot' (Ps 68:5). And elsewhere it is written: 'Who rides upon the heaven as your help' (Ps 18:12)."

[571] L. L. Grabbe, "Hebrew *pāʿal* / Ugaritic *bʿl* and the Supposed *b / p* Interchange," *UF* 11 (1979): 307-314.

[572] W. Herrmann, "Rider Upon the Clouds," *DDD,* 703-705; Miller, *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel*, 41; S. Mowinckel, "Drive and / or Ride in the Old Testament," *VT* 12 (1962): 278-299; E. Ullendorff, "Ugaritic Studies Within Their Semitic and Eastern Mediterranean

attribution of Baal's stock throne-chariot imagery to an El figure convincingly demonstrates an El-Yahweh fusion of the high god in the book of Daniel, and therefore a being other than El or Yahweh played the Baal role of vice-regent under the high god. That an El and Yahweh separation in Daniel 7 is a misguided explanation is also undermined by Jewish speculation of two powers in heaven based on this very passage during the Second Temple period.[573]

The implications of an El-Yahweh fusion for understanding the divine status of the Son of Man in Daniel 7 are illustrated below:

Ugarit / Baal Cycle	**Daniel 7**
(A) El, the aged high God, is the ultimate sovereign in the council.	**(A) The Ancient of Days, is the ultimate sovereign in council, and thus plays the El role in the scene. However, he is also seated on the fiery, wheeled throne-chariot, which is a Baal motif. The Ancient of Days therefore appropriates both El and Baal features, and represents the Yahweh-El fusion of earlier canonical literature, where this well-known Baal motif was attributed to both Yahweh and El, even in the same passage at times, as here.**
(B) Baal defeats Yamm	(B) The Ancient of Days also fulfills a Baal role here, since he, along with the council, decide that the fourth beast from the sea (יַמָּא) must be killed. He also plays an El role, by withdrawing kingship from the other three beasts.[574]
(C) El bestows kingship upon the god Baal, the Cloud-Rider.	(C) Yahweh-El, the Ancient of Days, bestows kingship upon the Son of Man who rides the clouds. Yahweh is thus not the Cloud-Rider, since Yahweh was fused with the El character, the high sovereign, the Ancient of Days.
(D) Baal is king of the gods and El's vice-regent. His rule is everlasting.	(D) The Son of Man is given everlasting dominion as a deity-level vice-regent to Yahweh-El. He is king of all the nations and so also over their gods (cf. Deut 32:8-9). He is "king of the gods" by virtue of his global dominion over the nations.

In effect, Daniel 7 utilizes the Canaanite imagery to both reinforce the El-Yahweh fusion and draw attention to Israelite religion's own version of the divine vice-regent pattern under Israel's high God. The bureaucratic structure of the divine council has neither, in Smith's words, "collapsed," nor has it been obscured or censored. On the contrary, the literary reality of Jewish speculation in Second Temple writings concerning a

Setting," *BJRL* 46 (1963-64): 236-249.

573 Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 148-149.

574 See *KTU* 1.2.III:17-18 and 1.6.VI:26-29, where Athtar and Mot respectively are threatened by El with the withdrawal of their kingship.

second tier of gods under the high God of Israel and his first-tier divine vice-regent is comprehensible precisely because the idea of divine plurality was *familiar* to those writers due to the *retention* of such categories in canonical texts.[575]

Not unexpectedly, as Segal's work on the two powers controversy details, there were Jewish exegetes who resisted the implication of two divine beings in Daniel 7.[576] One common answer to the language of Daniel 7 was that Yahweh-El's vice-regent was the Davidic king, a view that was taken up by the messianic predilections of many pre-critical scholars. This interpretation might be expected in view of several passages in the Hebrew Bible that speak to the universal rule of the Davidic king.[577] The assumption of two thrones in Psalm 110 (one for the Davidic king) would also appear to support such an answer. Even more noteworthy is the relationship of the Baal Cycle to Psalm 89, where the flow of verses 7-19 follow the Baal Cycle in describing the enthronement of Yahweh-El, but verses 20-38 apply Baal motifs to the Davidic throne:

---

[575] As Chapter Eight will detail, there was no shortage of interpretive options among Jewish writers who sought to explain this divine vice-regency.

[576] Dan 7:9ff. was placed on a list of forbidden passages by the rabbis (i.e., one had to have the assistance of one's rabbi to read them). See Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 148-149.

[577] Cf. 2 Sam 7:8-16; 23:1-7; Isa 9:6-7; Psalm 110.

The Baal Cycle	Psalm 89
• El and his council are confronted with the revolt of Yamm.	• Celebration of Yahweh's incomparability in the divine assembly and its members (7-9).
• Yamm is defeated by Baal.	• Yahweh's superior status is based on his control over the swelling of the sea (גֵּאוּת הַיָּם) and his primeval victory over Rahab (10-11) and other enemies.
• Baal moves to Ṣaphon and is enthroned.	• The psalm moves to the establishment of the world (12-14), an allusion to Zaphon (*ṣaphon*, v. 13), a description of the divine throne (v. 15), and the reaction of Yahweh's people, Israel (16-18).
• Baal is proclaimed king.	• Verse 19 is a triumphant shout of Yahweh's kingship: " For the Lord is our shield, and the Holy One of Israel our king."
	• In 89:26 King Yahweh promises to "set the hand" of the Davidic king "upon the sea (ים)" and "upon the rivers (נהרות)." • The Davidic king is God's son (89:28-29), his בכור, whom he declares to be עליון over the kings of the earth forever (89:30, 38a). Baal imagery transferred to David; David's throne plays the role of Baal, since he: • gains victory over Yamm / Nahar; • is son to Yahweh as Baal is to El; and • appropriates Baal's title of עליון.

There seems little doubt that Psalm 89 follows the flow of the Baal Cycle, and that the Davidic king's eternal rule is articulated in the language of the eternal nature of Baal's rule. But does Psalm 89 utilize the Baal Cycle *in the same way* and *for the same reason* as Daniel 7? Asked another way, while the author of Psalm 89 uses the Baal Cycle's language of divine vice regency when speaking of the Davidic dynasty, does the author of Daniel 7 have the Davidic king in mind when he describes the Son of Man?

Such a perspective of Daniel 7 would require that the Davidic king be considered a god, an idea usually connected to the concept of the king as Yahweh's son. Scholars have disagreed as to whether this terminology speaks of an adoption of the king as God's son or whether the king was to be regarded literally as a god on earth (*deus incarnatus*) from birth (*hieros gamos*). Those who favor the incarnational view point to texts in the Hebrew Bible that confirm the Davidic king as God's son (Ps 2:7; 110:3) and which regarded him as an

אלהים under Yahweh (Ps 45:7).[578] The famous passage in Isaiah 9 also comes to mind, where the titles אל גבור and אביעד occur with respect to the child who was most likely Hezekiah. John Day points out that at Ugarit the king was apparently considered a god and the son of the god El. For example, each of the names of the dead kings in the Ugaritic king list is preceded by the word *ʾil*.[579] The king was also considered a god prior to death. In the Keret Epic, when King Keret is ill, his son says, "Is then Keret the son of El, the offspring of *Lṭpn* and the Holy One? . . . Shall you then die, father, as men? . . . How can it be said that Keret is the son of El, the offspring of *Lṭpn* and the Holy One? Shall gods die?"[580]

This evidence notwithstanding, Psalm 89 should be viewed against the Baal Cycle, not the Keret Epic, for the biblical author follows the former, not the latter. A Baal Cycle backdrop would argue for sonship in adoptive terms. It is conceivable that Baal could be understood in such terms, recalling the patrimonial approach to the Baal Cycle. Baal *becomes* El's son (i.e., the crown prince) after his defeat of Yamm and in conjunction with the reception of kingship. At the point of Baal's victory, he is called "his [El's] son" (*bnh*) and El is now "my [Baal's] father" (*ʾaby*). Nevertheless, that Baal is indeed a god is unquestioned. The point here is that the biblical authors of Psalm 89 and Daniel 7 are utilizing the Baal Cycle for divergent reasons to make divergent points.

Aside from these literary allusions, there is evidence in the Hebrew Bible against an incarnational understanding of the king's divinity. Other human beings besides the Davidic king were referred to as divine sons, but were not thought of as gods.[581] Moreover, the divine status of the Davidic king in the Hebrew Bible appears to have been bestowed at a definite point in time. The king was "taken" from the sheep (2 Sam 7:8) and appointed נגיד at that time.[582] The wording of Ps 2:7 suggests the same: בְּנִי אַתָּה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם יְלִדְתִּיךָ.

---

[578] The statement above takes אלהים as the vocative. Some scholars argue against this by contending that an original prefixed כְּ has been omitted from the text on the grounds of euphony, or translate the verse "Your throne is God's forever and ever." The vocative is more natural here, however, as many scholars have recognized. The vocative is also conveyed by LXX: ὁ θρόνος σου ὁ θεός εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος.

[579] John Day, "The Canaanite Inheritance of the Israelite Monarchy," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar* (ed. John Day; JSOTSup 270; Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2000), 72-90 (esp. 82). See *KTU* 1.113.

[580] *KTU* 1.16.i.10-25.

[581] See Exod 4:23 and Hos 1:10, where the people are referred to in such terms.

[582] The term נגיד is taken by scholars as referring to the crown prince. See the lengthy treatment of this issue in Tryggve N.D. Mettinger, *King and Messiah: The Civil and Sacral Legitimation of the Israelite Kings* (ConBOT 8; Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1976), 151-184, 254-

As Mettinger states, in Psalm 89 the king remains "manifestly a human being,"[583] since he was chosen from among the people (89:20).

The above discussion points to the conceptual difficulties of arguing that the Son of Man in Daniel 7, who bears an epithet of Yahweh, is the earthly Davidic king.[584] The chief obstacle to this position, though, is the book of Daniel itself. The Davidic line is never mentioned in Daniel 7, and is entirely absent from the book of Daniel as a whole.[585] The imagery of Daniel 7 is never linked to a restored Davidic dynasty, and a restoration of the dynastic family of David is never described or alluded to. One might also argue that the outlook of the post-exilic redactor of Psalm 89 correlates to the author of Daniel 7, since the redactor explicitly noted the absence of the Davidic line (89:45; see below). In the absence of God's earthly vice-regent, a heavenly vice-regent would continue the promise of global sovereignty over the nations. Second Temple period authors recognized the heavenly nature of Daniel 7's Son of Man, since they embraced the notion of two powers *in heaven*, not just the bestowal of sovereignty to an earthly ruler, however divine.[586]

6.3 *Divine Plurality, the "Princes" of Daniel, and Yahweh's Vice-Regent*

Before offering my own suggestion as to a non-Davidic vice-regent Son of Man and his relationship to Psalm 89, some comments are necessary relative to post-critical scholarship's two most common identifications of the Son of Man: corporate Israel and an angel, usually the archangel Michael.[587]

293.

583 Mettinger, *King and Messiah*, 263.

584 Many interpreters prior to the advent of critical scholarship merged Daniel 7 and Psalm 89 in defense of a messianic identity for the Son of Man and thus a divine-human messiah. This view persisted among Jews into the rabbinic era. Collins notes several "undisputed examples" of this: *b. Sanh.* 98a; *Num Rab.* 13:14; *ʾAggadat Bĕrʾēšît* 14:3; 23:1 (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 307, note 264). Akiba's notion that the (presumed) two thrones in Daniel 7 were for God and King David also suggest the messianic view (see W. T. Horbury, "The Messianic Associations of 'The Son of Man,'" *JTS* 36 [1985]: 46). With respect to the "exalted human" category, some scholars have sought to identify Judas Maccabee with the figure of Daniel 7 on the grounds that Judas was the ruler who followed the fourth beast, identified as Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The comment in Dan 11:34, that the *maśkîlîm* received "little help" when persecuted is usually taken as an off-handed comment against the Maccabees, and so this interpretation has not gained a following (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 309). It is also unclear how Judas could be conceived of as being the one to whom everlasting dominion over the nations is given.

585 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 309.

586 As Alan Segal documents in *Two Powers in Heaven,* the view that the passage evinces two divine beings or manifestations of God was condemned only *after* the rise of Christianity. As examples, he references *Mekilta of R. Simeon bar Yohai, Bašalah* 15; and *Mekilta of R. Išmael, Baḥodeš* 5, *Širta* 4 (cf. *Two Powers in Heaven*, 33-59). Chapter Eight of this study will demonstrate that this view was present and permissible in Judaism prior to that time. My own view is similar, that the "Son of Man" is an unidentified אלהים member of the divine council, and therefore above the rank of angel.

587 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 308-310.

The weakness of the corporate view is that it requires equating the Son of Man with the קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין (7:18) and the (ל)עַם קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין (7:27). The two phrases are not synonymous and, as Collins observes, two thousand years of exegesis has noted that fact repeatedly.[588] Nevertheless, there is some sort of relationship between the Son of Man and both groups. This study departs from a "corporate only" interpretation of the scholarly mainstream, that the Son of Man is a symbol of Israel.[589] The view taken by this study dovetails a corporate explanation with the second predominant view, that the Son of Man is an unnamed heavenly figure. The result is an interpretive alternative that utilizes well-established divine council imagery and the pre-exilic worldview of Deut 32:8-9. Before offering this suggestion, some discussion of the identification of the Son of Man as an angel is necessary.

The idea that the Son of Man is an angel or divine being is typically articulated in terms of Michael, who is called the prince of Israel (10:21; 12:1), though Z. Zevit has tried to argue for Gabriel as the Son of Man.[590] The weakness of Zevit's view is that it requires the phrase "the man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision at first" (9:21) to refer to the Son of Man in Dan 7:13 rather than the angelic interpreter of 7:16. The latter is more coherent since Gabriel serves as an interpreter in 8:15 and 9:21. It would also seem odd that Gabriel, a being of equal rank with Michael, Israel's prince, should inherit everlasting dominion over beings of equal status.[591] By definition "the Prince of the host" (8:11) and the "Prince of princes" (8:25) is a being who rules over Michael and the other princes.

As noted earlier, the title "chief prince" borne by Michael is no equivalent to "the Prince of the host" and the "Prince of princes" since there is more than one "chief prince" according to Dan 10:13. Nevertheless, many scholars seek to identify Michael with these titles, particularly scholars who also desire to see Michael as the referent of the Son of Man descriptor. Aside from the fact that such a view does not fit the plurality of chief princes noted above, there are other obstacles to the attempt to equate Michael with these titles.

First, the descriptions of Daniel's interaction with heavenly beings in chapters 8 and 10 do not correlate Israel's patron prince with the exalted prince above all the other princes. In Dan 8:13 we read of two holy ones

---

588 Ibid., 309.
589 See for example: Montgomery, *Commentary on Daniel*; Hartman and DiLella, *The Book of Daniel*; Bentzen, *Daniel*.
590 Z. Zevit, "The Structure and Individual Elements of Daniel 7," *ZAW* 80 (1968): 394-396.

(sg., קדוש) conversing about the vision Daniel had just witnessed. As Daniel pondered the vision and their words, a different divine being appeared to him (8:15) described as having "the appearance of a man" (כְּמַרְאֵה־גָבֶר). In the very next verse Daniel notes that he heard "a man's voice from between the banks of the Ulai (River)" calling to the divine being who had just appeared to him. The voice referred to the divine being as Gabriel and commanded him to assist Daniel in understanding the vision. Gabriel is also mentioned by name in Dan 9:20-21, where he is described as "the man Gabriel" (הָאִישׁ גַּבְרִיאֵל). In Dan 10:5-6 we then read:

> 5 וָאֶשָּׂא אֶת־עֵינַי וָאֵרֶא וְהִנֵּה אִישׁ־אֶחָד לָבוּשׁ בַּדִּים וּמָתְנָיו חֲגֻרִים בְּכֶתֶם אוּפָז׃
> 6 וּגְוִיָּתוֹ כְתַרְשִׁישׁ וּפָנָיו כְּמַרְאֵה בָרָק וְעֵינָיו כְּלַפִּידֵי אֵשׁ וּזְרֹעֹתָיו וּמַרְגְּלֹתָיו
> כְּעֵין נְחֹשֶׁת קָלָל וְקוֹל דְּבָרָיו כְּקוֹל הָמוֹן׃
>
> 5 Then I lifted up my eyes, and looked, and behold, a man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: 6 His body also was like beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like shining brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Many scholars have noticed that the description given here of "a man" (אִישׁ־אֶחָד) whom readers know to be a heavenly being, differs markedly from the book's prior descriptions of heavenly "men,"[592] particularly in that the description of this "superterrestrial character . . . is a combination of various passages from the book of Ezekiel (chs. 1, 9, and 40)."[593] This same divine being is later described as "one in the likeness of the sons of men" (10:16; כִּדְמוּת בְּנֵי אָדָם) and "one having the appearance of a man" (10:18; כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם). Daniel's reaction to the presence of this "man" is quite different as well, and is very similar to the reactions of individuals to theophany. His physical strength disappeared (10:8), he fell into a deep sleep (10:9; נרדם), and he trembled (10:11).

---

[591] As already noted, this is a glaring problem with identifying Michael with the Son of Man as well.

[592] Gillian Bampfylde, "The Prince of the Host in the Book of Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls," *JSJ* 14:2 (1983): 129-134.

[593] Benedikt Otzen, "Michael and Gabriel: Angelological Problems in the Book of Daniel," in *The Scriptures and the Scrolls: Studies in Honor of A.S. van der Woude on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (ed. F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, and C.J. Labuschagne; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), 115. Otzen nevertheless identifies the figure as Michael, despite his admission of the problems. He also overlooks several of the observations in the discussion above.

Who is this heavenly "man"? The author could easily have identified him as Gabriel but does not, and does not have Daniel recognize him. Daniel's reaction to him tells us he is not Gabriel, whom Daniel had been in the company of earlier. He is not Michael either, since the mysterious figure tells Daniel that when he was fighting the princes of Persia (10:21) only Michael "your prince" assisted him. The only clue that the reader has encountered this figure before in any way comes in the phrase כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם. In Dan 8:16, Daniel heard a voice command Gabriel from between the banks of the Ulai River that came from a figure described with the phrase כְּמַרְאֵה־גָבֶר. Later in 10:18 the mystery figure is likewise described as being כְּמַרְאֵה אָדָם. An equation of the figure of 8:15-16 and chapter 10 is made apparent in Dan 12:6, where Daniel sees the now familiar man "clothed in linen" standing "above the waters of the stream." The figure of 12:6 is therefore the man whose voice Daniel had heard coming between the banks of the Ulai when he first saw Gabriel. Whoever this figure was, he had the authority to command Gabriel, widely considered an archangel in Second Temple literature, and had been assisted by Michael, Israel's prince, in some cosmic battle. His superior status to Gabriel and Michael, the fact that he does not appear to be in charge of any particular nation but is above the geographic princes (and an opponent of Gentile nations at that), the theophanic language used to describe him, and the frightened human reaction to his presence, especially when no such reaction came with respect to the archangel Gabriel, have cumulatively prompted scholars to identify him as the "Prince of the host" (8:11) and "Prince of princes" (8:25).[594] Though absolute certainty of this equation is not obtainable, it makes the most sense of the options. One thing is quite clear from these descriptions, though—this figure is neither Gabriel nor Michael.[595]

Despite these problems, J. Collins (among many others) defends the identification of the Son of Man with Michael. However, it is quite noteworthy that Collins does *not* equate Michael with the titles "Prince of the host" and "Prince of princes." This marks a change in Collins' position from earlier writings on this issue, and

[594] Bampfylde, "The Prince of the Host," 130.

[595] Appeals to the Qumran War Scroll for this equation also fail, as will be noted in Chapter Seven. Put simply here, the fact that the Prince of Light in the War Scroll (who is never named as Michael) so closely parallels the Prince of the host and Prince of princes of Daniel means the same tests of consistency apply. The militaristic context of the role of the Prince of Light and the fact that Michael is not the chief archangel in Second Temple literature also weighs decisively against a Michael/Prince of Light correlation (cf. Bampfylde, "The Prince of the Host," 130). The connection between the Prince of Light and Melchizedek, who is identified as the אלהים of Psalm

the reasons are unclear. Collins at one time argued that "the figure of Michael must be seen as a development of the Prince of the host of Yahweh who appears in Joshua 5,13 and of the angel of the Exodus."[596] Collins' change of position is all the more startling since this triangulation between the שַׂר־צְבָא־יְהוָה, Daniel's Prince of the host (שַׂר־הַצָּבָא), and the angel who bears the name of Yahweh in Exod 23:20-23 is precisely how many Second Temple authors saw matters, not to mention later rabbis who dealt with the two powers controversy.[597] That the מלאך יהוה of Exod 23:20-23 and the שׂר־צבא־יהוה of Josh 5:13 are to be identified was made clear in Chapter Two via the precise parallel phrasing in the description of the מלאך יהוה between Num 22:23 and Josh 5:13 (cf. the phrase וְחַרְבּוֹ שְׁלוּפָה בְּיָדוֹ in both descriptions).

Collins divorces the Son of Man (and Michael in his view) from the Prince of princes and Prince of the host in Daniel because he is troubled by his astute observation that these titles in Daniel do in fact point to a deity in the top tier of the council, and the fact that these titles cannot refer to Michael, as noted above. Collins identifies Michael and the Son of Man of Daniel 7 on the grounds of analogy (angels are elsewhere described as having a human appearance[598]) and his position as prince of Israel.[599] He argues that Michael is, in his words, the "leader of the heavenly host," a phrase which he believes equates Michael with the Son of Man in Dan 7:13.[600]

Significantly, by Collins' own admission, his phrase "leader of the heavenly host," is *not* referring to the titles "Prince of the host" or "Prince of princes."[601] His phrase is merely a pragmatic designation, for it does not appear in the text; that is, it is not a title Daniel uses. Collins apparently feels constrained to simultaneously create this designation and yet divorce it from the titles of Dan 8:11 and 8:25 because those references are paralleled in Dan 11:36 by phrases that clearly reference the top tier of the divine council:

---

82 in 11QMelchizedek is also of great importance for this issue.

596 John J. Collins, "The Mythology of Holy War in Daniel and the Qumran War Scroll: A Point of Transition in Jewish Apocalyptic," *VT* 25 (1975): 601.

597 See Otzen, "Michael and Gabriel," 121 and Bampfylde, "The Prince of the Host," 130-131.

598 See for example Gen 18:2; Josh 5:13; Ezek 8:2; 9-10; Zech 1:8; 2:5.

599 John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 309-310, 318-319.

600 Ibid., 318.

601 Ibid., 332-333.

Dan 8:11, 25	Dan 11:36
8:11 - He (the little horn) was **magnified even up to the Prince of the host**, from whom the daily sacrifice was taken away, and whose sanctuary was cast down. 8:25 – He (the little horn) will grow great in his own mind, and shall destroy many off guard. He will **stand against the Prince of princes** . . .	11:36 - And the king shall do as he wishes; and **he shall magnify himself above every god**, and he shall speak wondrous things **against the God of gods** . . .

These parallels lead Collins to argue that the titles of 8:11 and 8:25 are epithets that refer to God himself.[602] I would agree with this observation insofar as the parallels speak to the rulership of the high God, but not God himself. Collins' interpretive shortcoming in this regard is that he fails to consider God's rulership through a divine vice-regent in the divine council. Collins argues that Dan 11:36 informs us that when the little horn opposes the "Prince of the host" and the "Prince of princes," he is actually opposing God. He defends applying the princely nomenclature to the high God on the basis that the title "prince" is applied to an angel in Josh 5:14.[603] In Collins' interpretation, to argue for any other figure than Yahweh bearing these titles contradicts the operating assumption about the exclusivistic monotheism of Israel during the Second Temple period—that by the time of Daniel's composition there were no other gods in Israel's religion.

The problems with Collins' position should be apparent. It is far from clear how the phrasing of Josh 5:14 identifies *Yahweh* as a prince, since Yahweh is not an angel and "prince" implies subordination to a superior. These ideas have no biblical precedent. While I agree that Dan 8:11, 25 and 11:36 and the titles "Prince of the host" / "Prince of princes" clearly point to a deity figure above all other princes, concluding that this figure can only be Yahweh is unwarranted.

In the view of this writer, the only lucid alternative is that these titles, along with Josh 5:14, refer to Yahweh's co-ruler, his vice-regent. It is Collins' assumption about the rejection of divine plurality in Second Temple Judaism that has forced him into this unworkable position, that Yahweh is his own high prince. This is not only illogical, but fails to take note of the divine council context of Daniel 7 and its description, in concert with the Baal Cycle, of the divine vice-regent. As a deity level being with authority over all other divine beings

[602] Ibid., 333.
[603] Ibid., 375.

(the "princes"), the "Prince of the host" of Dan 8:11 and the "Prince of princes" of 8:25 should be identified as a being of highest rank under the high God: the vice-regent. If one waives the assumption of exclusivistic monotheism in the Second Temple period, the difficulties disappear and the context for the subsequent two powers controversy becomes clear.

Returning to the larger question of Daniel and the divine council, it is the Baal Cycle that provides the operative paradigm for interpreting the heavenly bureaucracy in Daniel. As Baal was elevated to kingship with El, effectively functioning as the high sovereign over El's sons while remaining "ontologically" inferior to El, so the "Prince of the host" and the "Prince of princes" need not be identified with Yahweh-El. The vice-regent Son of Man in Daniel 7 functions precisely as the Baal figure under Yahweh-El. Baal's assorted lordship titles—namely "most high" (*ʿly*),[604] "king, sovereign"(*mlk*),[605] "[the one] who rules over the gods" (*d ymlk ʿl ʾilm)*,[606] "ruler" (*yw*),[607] and "Prince Baal" (*bʿl zbl*)[608]—all aptly describe the rulership of the Son of Man, who is given everlasting dominion over the Gentile nations and the gods who rule them. Baal was king over El's sons as his vice-ruler, yet he did not outrank El. To oppose Baal's role as king was to assault El's authority. When the little horn vaunts himself against the "Prince of the host" / "Prince of princes," he opposes the high God who granted the vice-regent this sovereignty.

But questions remain. What are we to make of the dominion of the עַם קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין? If the high prince of Daniel is not Michael, how may he be identified? If a human messiah-king is not in view, what is the relationship between Daniel 7 and Psalm 89? My own suggested answers to these problems combine the view that the Son of Man is the vice-regent of the divine council under Yahweh with a corporate explanation drawn from the pre-exilic religion of Israel that faithful Israelites were "sons" of God.

---

[604] *DULAT* 1:169. *KTU* 1.16.III:6,8. See Wyatt, "The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God," 419.
[605] *DULAT* 2 :550. *KTU* 1.3.V: 32; 1.4.IV:43
[606] *KTU* 1.4.VIII:50. This title was also used of Yamm before he was defeated by Baal (*KTU* 1.1.IV.11-14).
[607] *KTU* 1.1.IV:10-11. Wyatt suggests that Ugaritic *yw* "is probably a Sanskrit loan word (*yau<dyaus*) occurring in various Near Eastern contexts, including, perhaps, the DN Yahweh" (Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit*, 48, note 51). Wyatt's idea regarding the divine name derivation is supported by few (cf. J.C. de Moor, *The Rise of Yahwism*, 113-118). See Karel van der Toorn, "Yahweh," *DDD,* 911; idem, "Anat-Yahu, Some Other Deities, and the Jews of Elephantine," *Numen* 39 (1992): 88-92.
[608] M. Dietrich and O. Loretz, "Die Baʿal-Titel *bʿl ʾarṣ* und *ʾaliy qrdm*," *UF* 12 (1980): 391-393; W. Herrmann, "Baal Zebub," *DDD,* 154-156. See *DULAT* 2:998.

Considering the issue of the vice-regent first, we return to the "faithful witness in the clouds" discussion of Ps 89:37-38. This earlier discussion is now profitable for demonstrating parallels between the cloud witness and the figure of Daniel 7, and for suggesting they are the same bureaucratic vice-regent.

An identification of the Son of Man as a deity in the clouds is possible in view of the fact that, like Daniel 7, Psalm 89 is a passage that concerns the divine council and follows the flow of the Baal Cycle's establishment of everlasting dominion. In Daniel 7 Yahweh-El and his council decreed the death of the fourth beast (or kingdom) and the removal of the dominions of the other three beasts so as to elevate the Cloud Rider to vice-regent status. In Psalm 89, at least prior to 89:39, the high God Yahweh-El, incomparable in council (89:7-9) and holder of all power in heaven and the earth (89:10-19), decrees that the line of David will have an everlasting rule over Israel, the chosen people (89:4-5; 20-37). After 89:39, the line of David is seen as “fallen” (89:45), but the promises cannot fail completely. The covenant of eternal rule is still guaranteed by a faithful witness in the clouds (89:38). Thus Psalm 89, like Daniel 7 which ignores the Davidic line, does not require a human Davidide to fulfill the promise of global sovereignty. In Daniel 7 the high God and his council grant everlasting rule to Israel by means of a divine being in the clouds whose power to rule can never be taken away, but who in turn shares dominion with Israel in 7:21, 22, and 25. The difference between the two is that in Psalm 89 a divine cloud acts as witness to the covenant, whose original Davidic referent has been lost in the wake of exile, whereas in Daniel 7 the divine cloud figure becomes the covenant’s fulfillment to a people who have long understood the demise of David’s dynasty.

Comparative data for divine "cloud witnesses" testifying to ancient covenants are extant. Mullen's work on the cloud witness argues persuasively that the language of Ps 89:37-38 is that of ancient royal-grant covenants.[609] Expressing agreement with Mullen, Tate notes in his own study of the Psalm, "[I]n these covenants a deity unilaterally establishes and empowers a king or other favored person. Gifts and privileges are bestowed on faithful servants by a divine suzerain (as with Abraham in Gen 15:17)." Mullen's treatment of the matter includes verse 36, and so taken together the passage would read:

36 Once I swore by my holiness –	36 אַחַת נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי בְקָדְשִׁי

[609] Mullen, "The Divine Witness," 207-218.

I do not lie to David;	אִם־לְדָוִד אֲכַזֵּב׃
37 His offspring will continue forever	37 זַרְעוֹ לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה
And his throne as the sun before me;	וְכִסְאוֹ כַשֶּׁמֶשׁ נֶגְדִּי׃
38 As the moon it will be established forever.	38 כְּיָרֵחַ יִכּוֹן עוֹלָם
And a witness in the clouds will be faithful. Selah	וְעֵד בַּשַּׁחַק נֶאֱמָן סֶלָה׃

Mullen's study and Veijola's interaction with his work produced several important observations and textual analogies to the structure of the covenant with David's house in Psalm 89. In several texts clouds function as witnesses to the treaty-covenant and, as Veijola admits, this is a common feature in Hittite treaties.[610] For example, in the Hittite copy of the treaty between Mursilis II and Duppi-Teshub of Amurru the treaty invokes a list of gods and personified natural forces as witnesses, stating: " . . . the mountains, the rivers, the springs, the great Sea, heaven and earth, the winds, and the clouds – let these be witnesses to this treaty and to the oath."[611] Mullen, citing the reference to the divine assembly in Ps 89:6-9, argues that the expression בשחק in verse seven brings the witness into the heavenly court.[612] Veijola's objection to this comparative evidence is only that the beginning of the psalm "does not derive from the same author as the following oracle (vv. 20-38) . . . [and so] we cannot be certain that the expression בשחק conveys exactly identical connotations in v. 7 and v. 38."[613] There are a number of studies on the psalm, however, that dispute the view of disparate composition, and even if this observation were correct, it is very dubious that the redactors would have used vocabulary that draws the parts together without intending connections.[614]

The function of the cloud witness in Ps 89:37-38, as with the royal grant treaty, is to guarantee the terms of the covenant, which specifically concern the creation of a dynastic line from David. As Weinfeld has demonstrated, this type of covenant protected the rights of the recipient of the covenant rather than the rights of the superior party.[615] Here the cloud witness obligates Yahweh to keep the terms of the covenant with David's

---

[610] T. Veijola, "The Witness," 415.
[611] Ibid., 415.
[612] Mullen, "The Divine Witness," 215-217.
[613] T. Veijola, "The Witness," 415-416.
[614] For a survey of the scholarship on the psalm's composition, see M. Tate, *Psalms 51-100*, 413-418.
[615] M. Weinfeld, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 75ff.

line. When the promises of restoring the glory of Davidic kingship to Israel fail after the return from exile, the unnamed cloud witness / vice-regent himself becomes the recipient of earthly sovereignty in Daniel 7.

It is significant that the Ugaritic material on the divine council's vice-regent illumines this aspect of divine intercession in another way. Specifically, the role of Baal as intercessor in Ugaritic texts provides another striking correlation to Psalm 89.

Though more commonly recognized as a warrior or fertility god, Baal is also depicted as an intercessor, and as the examples below reveal, the context for Baal's intercession for dynastic succession is the divine council.[616] The argument here is that this role of Baal should be considered in the backdrop of Psalm 89, and thus the cloud witness's guarantee of the dynastic succession to David and thus Israel. If this relationship be noted, the correlation of Daniel 7's Son of Man with the cloud witness argues anew that Daniel 7 and Psalm 89 are contextualized in complementary ways.

The idea of dynastic succession being mediated with El by Baal is found in the epics of Kirta and Danʾil. As Mullen points out, the central concern in these texts is "the insurance of progeny for the king so that dynasty might be continued."[617] In the case of Danʾil one reads:

> Then on the seventh day, Baal drew near with his supplication. "In need is Danʾil, man of Rapiʾ. Moaning is the Hero, the Harnamite, who has no son in his house like his brothers, nor scion like his kindred. He has no son like his brothers, nor scion like his kindred. (He has given) offerings for the gods to eat, oblations that the sons of Qudšu might drink! Will you not bless him, O Bull El, my father; strengthen him, O Creator of created things? Let there be a son in his house, a scion in the midst of his palace!"[618]

The intercession of Baal for King Kirta is similar:

> Then the council of El arrived and ʾAlʾiyan Baal spoke: "Come now, O Kindly One, El the Compassionate. Will you not bless Kirta, the noble? Will you not strengthen Nuʿmān, lad of El?"[619]

The terminology for Baal's supplication is noteworthy given this context. In several places Baal "stands beside El" (*qm ʿl ʾil*) to obtain promise of dynastic offspring for King Kirta.[620] The verb *qm* is part of the stock vocabulary of the divine council, where a member of the council "stands" before the high God to perform some

[616] Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 249-252.
[617] Ibid., 244. The texts in question are *KTU* 1.17.I:16-44 (Danʾil) and *KTU* 1.15.II:1-28 (Keret).
[618] *KTU* 1.17.I:16-27. The translation is Mullen's.
[619] *KTU* 1.15.II:11-16. The translation is Mullen's.
[620] See *KTU* 1.15.II:11-28; 1.17.I:16-27, 35-37, 43-44. The phrase comes from *KTU* 1.2.I:21.

function.[621] It is quite clear then from these texts that the intercession of Baal is made to the supreme authority in the Ugaritic pantheon, El, and in the instance of the Kirta text, the pleas are situated in the divine council. Thus not only is the divine council context evident, but the continuation of royal dynastic rule and divine intercession on the part of El's vice-regent are as well. When compared with the cloud-riding vice-regent figure of Daniel 7 who secures and extends the rule of Yahweh on earth through David's people Israel, an equation of the witness in the clouds in Psalm 89 and the Son of Man in Daniel 7 deserves serious consideration. This equation, along with the various difficulties with identifying the cloud figure of Daniel 7 with Michael, produces a sound basis for arguing that an exalted, unidentified member of the divine council more coherently accounts for the functions of the figure of Daniel 7 and his association with the holy ones and the people of Yahweh-El.

This is not to say that national Israel is to be entirely divested of the dominion described in Daniel 7. Dan 7:21, 22, and 25 link the rule of the Son of Man with the rule of Israel, the “people of the holy ones.”

18 וִיקַבְּלוּן מַלְכוּתָא קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין וְיַחְסְנוּן מַלְכוּתָא עַד־עָלְמָא
וְעַד עָלַם עָלְמַיָּא׃

But the holy ones of the most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even for ever and ever.

27 וּמַלְכוּתָה וְשָׁלְטָנָא וּרְבוּתָא דִּי מַלְכְוָת תְּחוֹת כָּל־שְׁמַיָּא יְהִיבַת
לְעַם קַדִּישֵׁי עֶלְיוֹנִין מַלְכוּתֵהּ מַלְכוּת עָלַם וְכֹל שָׁלְטָנַיָּא לֵהּ
יִפְלְחוּן וְיִשְׁתַּמְּעוּן׃

The kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under all heaven, shall be given to the people of the holy ones of the most High, whose[622] kingdom is an everlasting kingdom . . .

The language in these verses does not mean that Israel is the Son of Man, nor is it contradictory. A more careful look at these passages reveals that Dan 7:18, 27 link the Son of Man and his dominion with the holy ones of the divine council and the people of Israel.[623] The reception of rule by Israel’s holy ones does not mean that the dominion of the Son of Man has been usurped or replaced, for 7:27 concludes that the reign of this

[621] See especially in this regard the discussion in Chapter Three of the imperatival phrase (קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים) in Ps 82:8.
[622] The reference is to the people, not God, since the most logical antecedent of the suffix is the grammatically singular noun עם, not עליונין.
[623] As Collins notes, the "holy ones" in Daniel 7 are in all probability heavenly beings (John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 313-317). Collins' work follows several foundational studies of the term: Martin Noth, "The Holy Ones of the Most High," in *The Laws of the Pentateuch and Other Essays* (ed. Martin Noth; London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966; reprint, London: SCM, 1984), 215-228; L. Dequeker, "The Saints of the Most High," *OtSt* 18 (1973): 108-187; J. Goldingay, "'Holy Ones on High' in Daniel 7:18," *JBL* 107 (1988): 497-499. The “people of the holy ones” speaks to Israel’s pre-exilic worldview that the nation was overseen by Yahweh and his council.

figure is still in view: וְכֹל שָׁלְטָנַיָּא לֵהּ יִפְלְחוּן וְיִשְׁתַּמְּעוּן (". . . and all dominions shall serve and obey *him* [the Son of Man]").[624] The picture that emerges from Daniel's vision and its description is that Yahweh-El's vice-regent represents the interests of the divine council *and* Yahweh-El's chosen people, Israel, in such a way that the everlasting dominion envisioned is *shared* under the authority of Yahweh-El.

The implication of the above is that the post-exilic idea that a heavenly vice-regent was the mode of Yahweh's sovereignty over the nations—even in the absence of a Davidic king—was acceptable because of the pre-exilic precedent that Yahweh's superiority was demonstrated at the division of the nations, the subsequent election of Abraham/Israel after that division, and the victory of Yahweh and the vice-regent who bore his name over Egypt in the exodus.

6.4 *Summation*

The goal of this chapter was to demonstrate that the canonical book of Daniel, situated in the heart of the Second Temple period, contains clear references to divine plurality and vice regency in heaven. The picture of a seated council in heaven and a second being bearing an epithet of Yahweh seems hardly compatible with the consensus view of the rise of intolerant monotheism. One would expect such material to be quite troubling to militant monotheism—and it was, but only well into the Common Era when the rabbis felt compelled to censor the two powers interpretation of Dan 7:9ff. That Daniel was accepted as canonical and the two powers idea considered acceptable prior to at least the second century C.E. demonstrates that the religion of Israel prior to that time cannot be cast as a religion intolerant of other gods.[625] Monolatry is a more coherent description of both the post-exilic Second Temple attitude to interpretations of divine plurality and the data of Daniel.

As the next chapter on the Qumran sectarian material describes, these traditions and the teachings of the book of Daniel were the backdrop for the numerous references to the divine council and plural אלוהים / (בני) אלים in a divine council at Qumran. The sectarian community by the Dead Sea was obsessed with the divine assembly, merkabah exegesis, heavenly liturgies, and the belief that members of the sect were earthly members of the divine council. As in heaven, so on earth.

---

[624] לֵהּ may refer to Yahweh-El, but the point is moot since the vice-regent reigns at his behest and the high God's sovereignty was

extended to the vice-regent in Daniel 7.
625 Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, x, 260ff.

Chapter Seven

The Divine Council in Qumran Sectarian Literature

Scholars of the Dead Sea Scrolls are quite familiar with the attention paid in many of the scrolls to heavenly beings, and the scholarly work devoted to elucidating the "angelology" of the Qumran sect.[626] None of these studies, however, examines the heavenly beings in the Qumran material with the goal of discerning whether or not the scrolls show evidence of continuity with the divine council of pre-exilic Israelite religion. The goal of this chapter is to examine the sectarian literature of Qumran in order to demonstrate that the Qumran community's religious worldview was in concert with the monolatrous religion of pre-exilic Israel.[627] As we have seen in previous chapters, this worldview included a divine council composed (in part) of plural אלוהים / (בני) אלים, a divine vice-regent, and the belief that a council hierarchy of divine beings exercised geographical control of the Gentile nations, the nations set in opposition to Yahweh and his inheritance, Israel.

Far from articulating a faith that had long ago abandoned the divine council as a vestigial belief, the Qumran sectarian material displays an acute interest in the council and its relationship to human beings. While the vast majority of scholars are confident that the Qumran material portrays the pre-exilic council gods as angels, this simply is not the case. While ambiguous phrases such as "council of the holy ones" occur, there is no mention of a "council of angels (מלאכים)," and the terms אלהים and מלאכים are never clearly synonymous.[628] Conversely, the Qumran material contains numerous references to the divine council and its

[626] See Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1-36, 72-108 and the Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice;* G. W. Nickelsburg, "The Epistle of Enoch and the Qumran Literature," in *Essays in Honour of Yigael Yadin* (ed. G. Vermes; Oxford: Allanheld, 1983); John Strugnell, "The Angelic Liturgy at Qumran - 4Q Serek Šîrôt ʿÔlat Haššabat," in *Congress Volume, Oxford 1959* (VTSup 7; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960).

[627] By referring to "the angelology of the Qumran sect," this writer means to restrict the discussion to the sectarian literature produced by the community. The focus is also on the sectarian Hebrew texts alone, and derives from a computer-assisted search of the scrolls for the Hebrew terms and motifs associated with the divine council in the Hebrew Bible (*The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library, CD-ROM* [edited by Timothy H. Lim in consultation with Philip S. Alexander; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997]). Unless otherwise noted, counts used in this study are based on the results of database searches. Other Qumran material that contains many references to angels and divine beings, such as the "Rewritten Bible" (e.g., 1 Enoch) will be considered in Chapter Eight.

[628] By this I mean that the terms never certainly are identified as synonyms. Finding the two terms at all in proximity is rare (see the discussion), and such cases can quite easily be interpreted as the identification of each class (second-tier and lowest tier) within the council, just as is the case at Ugarit or the Hebrew Bible.

אלהים in precisely the same language and contexts as pre-exilic texts in the Hebrew Bible. Although it is certainly true that both אלהים and מלאכים occur in the sectarian material, the reader must recall that the existence of both terms in the Hebrew Bible's pre-exilic texts in no way indicates they refer to the same beings.

The conclusion that the plural אלהים in the Qumran sectarian material refers to angels is apparently driven only by the *a priori* assumption that by this time, the אלהים *must* be mere angels. It is difficult to understand Newsom's nomenclature of "angelic elim" and "angelic elohim" any other way.[629] Newsom's explanation of the terms אלים and אלהים (when undeniably plural) seems to be offered without any consideration of the tiered terminology and hierarchical structure of the ancient pre-exilic divine council recognized by scholars of Israelite religion:

> Many occurrences of אלוהים in the Shirot are ambiguous and might refer either to God or to the angels, though such expressions as כול אלוהים (4Q403 1 I 32, 32-33) and מלך אלוהים (4Q400 2 5) unequivocally attest the use of אלוהים for the angels. A biblical basis for אלוהים = angels is provided by Pss. 8:6; 82:1; 97:8; 138:1, etc., and by the expression בני אלוהים in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7.[630]

None of the scholarly works on the divine council noted in this study takes these references and these terms as proof of an אלהים / מלאכים equivalence.[631] On the contrary, these studies firmly establish that these passages and the council language therein speak of second-tier deities akin to the Canaanite divine assembly. Newsom's comments illustrate how the assumption that intolerant monotheism had arisen by the late sixth century B.C.E. serves as an interpretive grid for textual data.

This chapter examines the data of the Qumran sectarian material unencumbered by this grid. The result will demonstrate the persistence of a pre-exilic monolatrous worldview that contained a fervent belief in a council of אלוהים / אלים (בני) that was administered by a vice-regent under Yahweh's sovereignty.

7.1 *Terminology for the Divine Council*

---

[629] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 23-24.
[630] Ibid., 24.
[631] See Chapter Five for the pre-exilic flavor of the contexts of Pss 97:8 and 138:1.

As noted in Chapter Two, there are several terms in the Hebrew Bible for the divine council itself, each occurring either alone, or in construct with a *nomen rectum* that designated deity or the holy members of the divine council: עדת, דור, סוד, and קהל. Only עדת and סוד appear in Qumran sectarian literature in definite reference to a divine council.

The most frequent terminology for the divine council in the sectarian texts is עדת in construct followed by a deity noun. These various phrasings occur 28 times in a context that denotes a divine council. The familiar עדת אל of Ps 82:1 occurs six times;[632] עדת (לכול) אלים six times;[633] and עדת יהוה, עדת בני שמים, עדת משרתים (cf. Job 15), עדת עולמים, and עדת אבירים each once.[634] The remaining 11 occurrences[635] are the phrase עדת קדוש(ים) which, as will be noted, may or may not refer to an assembly of divine beings headed by Yahweh. Sometimes this phrase is used of the human members of the Qumran community, who believed that they were, in effect, the divine council on earth. Most of the 11 occurrences cited here likely point to the heavenly assembly.[636] The phrase עדת בחירו also occurs many times, but is ambiguous and has no clear divine council antecedent in the Hebrew Bible.

The divine council at Qumran is also described by the noun סוד in construct with a noun associated with heavenly bings. These combinations are found 15 times in the sectarian texts in the form of סוד אלים (three times),[637] בני שמים חבר סודם (one time),[638] סוד אלוהים (one time),[639] סוד עולמ(ים) (two times),[640] ובני סוד עולמים (one time),[641] and סוד קדוש(ים) (seven times).[642]

---

[632] 1Q33 (1QM), col. IV:9; 1QHa, col. XXVI:top 10; 4Q401 (4QShirShabb b), frg. 11:3; 4Q427, frg. 7, col. I:14; 4Q427, frg. 8, col. I:10; 11Q13 (11QMelch), frag 1,2i,3i,4, col. II:10.
[633] 1Q22, col. IV:1; 1Q33 (1QM), col. I:10; 4Q400, frg.1, col. I:4; 4Q431, frg. 2, col. II:8; 4Q457b, frg. 1, col. I:5; 4Q491, frg. 11, col. I:12.
[634] Respectively, 4Q466:3; 1QHa, col. XI:22; 4Q405 (4QShirShabb f), frg. 23, col. I:3; 4Q491, frg. 11, col. I:11; 1Q16, frags. 9-10, line 3.
[635] 1QS, col. V:20; 1Q28a, col. I:9; 1Q28a, col. II:16; 1Q33 (1QM), col. XII:7; 1QHa, col. III:bottom 10; 1QHa, col. V:14; 1QHa, col. XXV:3; 4Q181, frg. 1:4; 4Q381, frg. 76-77:7; 4Q428, frg. 20:3; 4Q491, frg. 11, col. I:14.
[636] L. Dequeker, "The 'Saints of the Most High' in Qumran and Daniel," in *Syntax and Meaning: Studies in Hebrew Syntax and Biblical Exegesis* (ed. A.S. van der Woude; *OtSt* 18; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), 108-187; C.H.W. Brekelmans, "The Saints of the Most High and Their Kingdoms," *כה 1940-1965* (ed. P.A.H. de Boer; *OtSt* 14; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965), 305-329.
[637] 4Q400 (4QShirShabb a), frg. 1, col. II:9; 4Q418, frg. 69, col. II:15; 4Q511 (4QShirShabb b), frg. 10:11.
[638] 1QS, col. XI:8.
[639] 4Q401 (4QShirShabb b), frg. 5:4.
[640] 1QHa, col. XI:21; 1QHa, col. XIX:12.
[641] 1QS, col. II:25.

To summarize, the sectarian material clearly borrows the terminology of the divine council (עדת אל) of Ps 82:1 six times. A council (סוד / עדת) of multiple deities (אלים), not angels, is referenced nine times, and in none of these references is the word מלאכים used to refer to the divine members of the council.[643] If scholars can agree that such language describes a council of Yahweh that accommodated other אלהים in pre-exilic texts, on what basis can they deny that the collective terminology reflects monolatry in post-exilic texts? The numerous references to the meeting place of the council using pre-exilic motifs make this an even more pointed question.

7.2 *The Meeting Place of the Divine Council*

As detailed in Chapter Two, in the Hebrew Bible the sanctuary of Yahweh, the meeting place of his council, is referred to by a variety of terms: הר מועד, אהל מועד, מעון, and סכו ומעונתו. This sanctuary houses Yahweh's throne, which is depicted variously as atop an expanse (רקיע) in Ezekiel 1, or as a cloud-chariot (עב הענן). Yahweh's throne and dwelling place were considered to be on a mountain located in the "heights of the north," the ירכתי צפון. The "height of Zion" was also a well-watered garden located in the ירכתי צפון. These "heights" are also referred to by other Hebrew terms, namely מרומים, מרום, and רמים. All of these terms are found in the sectarian literature of Qumran, most notably the *Shabbat Shirot* (4Q400-407; 11Q17; Masada 1039-200).[644] Additionally, other terms associated with the pre-exilic dwelling place of God in the Hebrew Bible, such as מִשכן, דביר, and קדש הקדשים are used to refer to council precincts.

---

642 1Q22, col. IV:1; 1QS, col. VIII:5; 1QHa, col. XII:25; 4Q259, frg. 2aI,2b-d, col. II:14; 4Q286, frg. 1a, col. II:b:4; 4Q428, frg. 19:7; 4Q502, frg. 19:1.

643 As noted earlier, this conclusion is based on database searches in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library* and Newsom's concordance of the vocabulary of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.

644 The scholarly critical edition is that of Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice.* In her critical edition, Newsom affirms that the *Shabbat Shirot* belong to the sectarian literature of Qumran (pp. 1-5), but she later retreated from this position. See Carol Newsom, "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran," in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters* (ed. W.H. Propp, B. Halpern, and D.N. Freedman; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 167-187; idem, "'He Has Established for Himself Priests': Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath *Shirot*," in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The New York Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin* (ed. Lawrence Schiffman; JSPSup 8; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 103-104. More recently, however, the sectarian provenance of the *Shabbat Shirot* has been firmly established by comparative study of terminology in established sectarian documents with the *Shirot*. See Devorah Dimant, "The Qumran Manuscripts: Contents and Significance," in *Time to Prepare the Way in the Wilderness: Papers on the Qumran Scrolls by Fellows of the Institute for Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1989-1990* (ed. Devorah Dimant and Lawrence Schiffman; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 23-58.

To begin, there are a number of references to the "heights" in the sectarian literature of Qumran.[645] Newsom lists 20 occurrences of the word מרום (including מרומים) in her concordance of the *Shabbat Shirot*, [646] several of which are modified by רום / רמים.[647] The majority of these instances are clearly associated with the pre-exilic council. Note the clustering of council terms in the following passage from 4Q403 (*ShirShabb d*), frg. 1, col. I:30-34:

> 30 . . . Praise the God of the exalted heights (מרומים הרמים) among all the 31 gods (אלים) of knowledge. . . . O you chiefs of 32 all the divine beings (כול אלוהים) praise the splendid praiseworthy God. . . . From it (God's splendor) come the praises of all the 33 divine beings (כול אלוהים), together with the splendor of his majesty. And exalt his exaltedness to the heights (למרום), O divine beings (אלוהים) of the exalted gods (מאלי רום) and the divinity of his glory above 34 all the exalted heights (מעל לכול מרומי רום). For he is the God of gods (אל אלים) of all the chiefs of the heights (ראשי מרומים), and king of kings of all the eternal councils (לכול סודי עולמים).

Several observations are appropriate. The phrase above in line 30, "the exalted heights" is also present four other times in other fragmentary texts. The juxtaposition of the phrase "the God of gods" with either the "heights" and "the chiefs of the heights" occurs twice more in 4Q405 frags. 4-5: 1-2 and in 4Q405, frg. 6:4.[648] A line of the fragmentary *Shabbat Shirot* text from Masada (MasShirShab 1.9) also reads “[Praise the G]od of the gods (the אלים), O you inhabitants of the height of heights (מרומי רומים).” Other references to the "heights" are scattered throughout several fragments of the Shirot.[649] Lastly, fragments 4Q405, frg. 6, 4Q405 22 8-9, and 4Q403 frg. 1, col. I:40-45 mention divine beings in the heights in proximity to the רקיע, which is either the throne dais or expanse above the throne.[650] The last of these serves as an example:

<u>4Q403 (*ShirShabb d*), frg. 1, col. I:43</u>

> 43 [Praise him,] divine spirits / spirits of the gods ([רוחי אלוה[ים); praising forever and ever the highest expanse of the heights (רקיע רוש מרו[מ]ים).

---

[645] Unless otherwise noted, this chapter’s translations of Qumran material are based on *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* (ed. Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr., and Edward Cook; New York: HarperCollins, 1996). However, translations of the *Shabbat Shirot* are based primarily on the work of Newsom (*Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*). When I blend my own translation with these sources to bring out council terminology more clearly, it will be indicated in a footnote.
[646] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 429-430. See the ensuing discussion for scroll citations.
[647] 4Q400 frg. 1, col. i: 20; 4Q400 frg. 1, col. ii: 2, 4; 4Q400 frg. 2:4; MasadaShirot frg. 1:9.
[648] The phrasing here may also be rendered "uppermost heaven" (cf. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 269-270).
[649] 4Q401, frg. 23:2; 4Q402, frg. 3, col. ii: 9; 4Q405, frg. 23, col. ii: 11-12.
[650] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 213, 40.

Roughly, then, there are a dozen references to the "heights" in context with a council of divine beings in the *Shabbat Shirot*. Again, there is no glossing or overlap of the terms of divine plurality by מלאכים. This vocabulary does not merely denote, as Newsom states, "general terms for heaven."[651] Rather, these are mythologically-charged phrases drawn from both pre-exilic divine council texts of the Hebrew Bible and Ezekiel's own vision of the divine throne.

Outside the *Shabbat Shirot*, other sectarian Qumran documents contain phrases using מרומים or מרום.[652] Many are fragmentary, but appear to reference divine council motifs:

> קודש קו]דשים במרומ[ים] - "holy of holies in the heights"[653]
> בצבא המרום - "in / among the host of the heights"[654]
> תשפוט במרום - "you shall pass judgment / rule in the heights"[655]

The term מעון for the divine abode and council meeting place is also found at Qumran, and in very explicit divine council settings. For example, in 4Q400 2:5 we read of "the glory of the king of the divine beings (אלהים), do they (the divine beings) declare in the dwelling places where they stand (במעוני עומדם)."[656] The use of the plural participle עומדם is noteworthy since "standing" around the throne is technical vocabulary used in divine council scenes.[657] The same text informs the reader that these dwelling places are in "the lofty heights" (מרומי רום). The same location, the "lofty heights", is the setting for 4Q403 1, col. ii: 19, where, in a magnificent council scene with numerous borrowings from Ezekiel 1, the holy ones are praising לאלוהי אלים in the במעון פלא ("wondrous dwelling").[658] In 4Q405 6 and 7 and 4Q404 5 and 6 the רוחות אלוהים are סביבה למעון מלך אמת וצדק ("gathered around the dwelling place of the king of truth

---

651 Ibid., 39.
652 As Dimant points out, cave 4 at Qumran has the highest concentration of sectarian material (Dimant, "The Qumran Manuscripts," 57).
653 4Q503, frg. 15-16, col. vi: 8.
654 4Q428, frg. 18, 2.
655 4Q428, frg. 18, 3.
656 See Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 110-111.
657 Mullen, *The Divine Council,* 207, 209-226.
658 See Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 110-111. 4Q403 1, col. ii: 19 = 4Q405 frags., 3.

and righteousness").[659] These phrases are repeated in three other fragmentary texts as well.[660] Outside the *Shabbat Shirot*, מעון is used for the divine dwelling place two times: 1QS 8:8 and 1QSb 4:25.

The terms משכן and דביר were also noted in the discussion of El's abode at Ugarit and the divine dwelling / meeting place of Yahweh and his council. In the *Shabbat Shirot*, משכן is used of God's dwelling two times. In 4Q403 1, col. ii: 6-10 the divine beings (אלוהים) move in and around the משכן רוש רום ("tabernacle of highest loftiness"). In 4Q405 22: 7 one reads that in the inner sanctum (דביר) of God's throne (מושב כבסא) the varied beings of the council throne room "exalt Him [unreadable] the Glory in the tabernacle (משכן) of the God of knowledge."[661]

The heavenly liturgies of the *Shabbat Shirot* are of particular interest with respect to the דביר, the inner sanctum of Yahweh and his council, and the matter of divine plurality in the sectarian texts. It will come as no surprise that scholars have concluded that the numerous occurrences of *merkabah* language in the *Shabbat Shirot* indicate that the Qumran sect drew upon Ezekiel's visions of the enthroned "glory of the Lord" (כבוד־יהוה).[662] The wheels (אופנים) of Ezekiel's throne chariot appear three times in the *Shabbat Shirot* as descriptive of the *merkabah*,[663] and the "wheelwork" (גלגל) of Ezekiel's vision is mentioned once.[664] Newsom's comparison of Ezekiel 1 and 10 with 4Q405, fragment 22 leaves no doubt as to the Ezekiel connection:[665]

	4Q405 22		Ezekiel
Line 7	הכבוד	1:28	כבוד יהוה
Lines 7-8	הכרובים יברכו בהרומםם והמון רנה ברום כנפיהם	10:16-17	ובצאת הכרובים את־כנפיהם לרום ... וברומם ירומו
Line 8	תבנית כסא מרכבה	1:26; 10:1	דמות כסא
Line 8	ממעל לרקיע הכרובים	1:26; 10:1	וממעל לרקיע אשר על־ראשם הרקיע אשר על־ראש הכרובים
Line 9	והוד רקיע האור	1:22	רקיע כעין הקרח

[659] Ibid., 213, 271.
[660] 4Q 402, col. 11:4; 4Q403 1, col. ii: 45; 4Q406 1 and 2.
[661] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 306.
[662] Ibid., 45. See also Carol Newsom, "Merkabah Exegesis in the Qumran Sabbath Shirot," *JJS* 38 (1987): 14.
[663] 4Q403 1, col. ii: 15; 4Q405 20, col. ii-21-22: 3, 9.
[664] 4Q405 20, col. ii-21-22: 10.
[665] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 55-56. The chart above includes most, but not all, of the elements in Newsom's chart.

Line 9	מתחת מושב כבודו	10:20	החיה אשר... תחת אלהי ישראל
Line 9	ובלכת האופנים	1:16-17	מראה האופנים ... בלכתם ילכו
Lines 9-10	מבין גלילי כבודו	10:6	מבינות לגלגל
Line 10	כמראי אש	1:13	כגחלי־אש ... כמראה הלפדים
Line 10	בדמות חשמל	1:4,27	כעין החשמל מתוך האש
Lines 10-11	ומעשי נוגה	1:4,27; 1:28	ונגה לו סביב כן הראה הנגה סביב
Line 12	בהמון לכתם	1:24	קול כנפיהם בלכתם קול המלה

Another sectarian text, 4Q385 fragment 4, includes a condensed version of the vision of Ezekiel 1 and its throne chariot.[666] Line 6 speaks of the "radiance of a chariot" (נגה מרכבה) with four "living creatures" (חיות) with wings "in the midst of the coals" (בתוך גחלים) who were like "coals of fire" (כגחלי אש). Adjacent to two of the wheels were "streams of fire" (שבלי אש).

The clear relationship between the *merkabah* description in the sectarian texts, especially the *Shabbat Shirot*, and the description of the throne of the God of Israel in Ezekiel 1 and 10 is noteworthy in that the *Shabbat Shirot* applies this imagery to a *plurality* of thrones. Specifically, the מרכבות are mentioned six times,[667] while plural thrones (כסאי or מושבי כבוד) are referenced four times.[668] The plural thrones and plural *markabot* are located inside seven דבירים within the heavenly temple, making a connection to the divine abode and council meeting place explicit.[669] Plurality is also reflected by the fact that the heavenly liturgies refer not only to one divine council, but to a plurality of councils, each headed by a divine prince (נשיא), again under the headship of the high God.[670] Several of these instances are unambiguously in the context of other divine beings, the plural אלוהים. Representative texts with regard to these plurality motifs are:

---

[666] J. Strugnell and D. Dimant, "4Q Second Ezekiel (4Q385)," *RQ* 13 (1988): 45-48.
[667] 4Q403 1, col. ii:15; 4Q405 20, col. ii-21:3, 5; 4Q405 22: 11-12; 11QShirShabb 2-1-9:6. Newsom comments that "it is often difficult to determine whether a plural of majesty or a genuine plurality of chariot thrones is intended," but later decides that the latter, a genuine plurality, is what the text denotes. This would seem more clear than her comments suggest in view of the multiple councils present in the *Shirot*, but her hesitation is due to a minimizing of the significance of the plural אלוהים and אלים in these texts. See Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 309.
[668] 4Q405 20, col. ii-21: 4; 4Q405 23, col. I: 3; 11QShirShabb 2-1-9: 5-6; 11QShirShabb f-c-k: 5.
[669] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 45. See also Mullen, *The Divine Council,* 147-169, and M. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 151-152.
[670] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 23ff.; Morray-Jones, "The Temple Within," 411. The plural councils are expressed with plural forms of סוד. References to plural councils that do not rely predominantly on reconstructions of the text are 4Q403 1, col. i:34; col. ii:19, 22; 4Q405 8-9: 2-3; MasShirShab col. ii:25.

4Q405 20, col. ii-21: 3-5

3 "His glorious chariots (מרכבות כבודו) [. . .] holy cherubim, luminous ophanim in the de[bir . . . spirits of the divine beings (אלוהים) . . . purity . . .] 4 of holiness, the construction of [its] cor[ners . . .] royal [. . .] the glorious seats of the chariot th[rones (מושבי כבוד למרכבו]ת) . . . wings of knowledge . . . wondrous powers . . .] 5 truth and righteousness, eternal [. . .] His glorious chariots (מרכבות כבודו) as they move . . .[671]

4Q405 20, col. ii-21: 11
". . . with glorious colors, wondrously hued, purely blended, the spirits of living divine beings (רוחות [א]לוהים חיים) which move continuously with the glory of the wondrous chariots (כבוד מרכבות)."[672]

4QBerakhot^a 1:ii

"The seat of thy glory and the footstools of thy Honor in the heights of your standing (ב[מ]רומי עומדכה) and the treading place of thy holiness; and the chariots of thy glory (ומרכבות כבודכה), their cherubim and their wheels with all their councils (סודיהמה)."[673]

Scholars have established that this implicit reference to a plurality of divine chariots derives from three places in the Hebrew Bible. Two of these sources, Daniel 7 and Isa 66:15, are post-exilic, and both of these may draw on the third source, which is certainly pre-exilic.

First, Daniel 7 clearly references a plurality of thrones and a *merkabah* throne in its divine council scene, and Qumran scholars have noted that the divine *markabot* in the heavenly liturgies draw upon these descriptions.[674] However, Daniel 7 attributes the imagery of the divine chariot only to the throne occupied by Yahweh-El.[675]

Second, Isa 66:15 reads:

כִּי־הִנֵּה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכַסּוּפָה מַרְכְּבֹתָיו לְהָשִׁיב בְּחֵמָה אַפּוֹ וְגַעֲרָתוֹ בְּלַהֲבֵי־אֵשׁ׃

See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

[671] The translation is Newsom's, as is the reconstruction, except for my translation "divine beings," substituted for Newsom's "godlike beings." See Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 303-321.
[672] The translation is again Newsom's save again for my adjustment of "divine beings." See Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 306.
[673] Bilha Nitzan, "4QBerakhot (4Q286-290): A Preliminary Report," in *New Qumran Texts and Studies: Proceedings of the First Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Paris 1992* (ed. George J. Brooke and Florentino Garcia Martinez; *STDJ* 15; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 56-57. Newsom notes that 4QBerakhot is almost certainly a sectarian composition due mainly to its reference to עצת היחיד, "the council / counsel of the community" (Newsom, "Sectually Explicit," 181).
[674] Newsom, "Merkabah Exegesis," 17, 26; Nitzan, "4QBerakhot," 63-71.
[675] L.T. Stuckenbruck, "The Book of Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Making and Remaking of the Biblical Tradition," in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran* (ed. J.H. Charlesworth; N. Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2000), 135-171.

This post-exilic text, speaking as it does of the final judgment of Yahweh, may be related to Zech 14:5b, "and the Lord my God will come with his holy ones" (וּבָא יְהוָה אֱלֹהַי כָּל־קְדֹשִׁים עִמָּךְ). Some scholars have supposed this is the case since the *Shabbat Shirot* does not have its multiple *markabot* driven or piloted by divine beings, but rather seems to depict them as entities themselves in texts such as 4Q403, frg. 1:II:15:[676] "And the chariots of his debir (והללו יחד מרכבות דבירו) give praise together, and their cherubim and their wheels bless wondrously."

The third source for this plurality—and possibly for the idea of plural thrones in post-exilic Daniel[677]—is Psalm 68, an unmistakably pre-exilic text that refers to multiple heavenly chariots:[678]

> Ps 68:18 רֶכֶב אֱלֹהִים רִבֹּתַיִם אַלְפֵי שִׁנְאָן אֲדֹנָי בָם סִינַי בַּקֹּדֶשׁ׃
> The chariots of God are myriads upon myriads, thousands upon thousands; the Lord has come from Sinai into his sanctuary.[679]

D. Halperin has established the connection between Ps 68:18 and Ezekiel 1, and thus the *markabot* imagery in the *Shabbat Shirot*.[680] Newsom agrees, commenting that "the Sabbath Shirot appears to provide evidence for the early exegetical association of the merkabah visions of Ezekiel with Psalm 68."[681] Newsom bases this assessment in part on the observation that in 4Q405, frg. 20, col.II-21-22:12-13, as the cherubim and the ophanim praise God's holiness, they are described as follows:

> בהרומם ירוממו פלא ובשוכן [יעמ]ודו קול גילות רנה השקיט
> ". . . and when they settle, they [sta]nd still. The sound of glad rejoicing falls silent."

[676] Morray-Jones, "The Temple Within," 412.
[677] Since Daniel does not refer to plural *markabot*, only plural thrones, an explicit connection between Daniel and these pre-exilic texts cannot be established.
[678] David J. Halperin, *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision* (TSAJ 16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 132-133.
[679] A number of scholars have argued that the hapax שִׁנְאָן is related to an Ugaritic word meaning "warrior" or "bowman" (cf. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic*, 102; Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 193). This alternative does not affect the first half of the verse that speaks to multiple chariots.
[680] Halperin, *Faces of the Chariot*, 105-110. Halperin also notes that later rabbinic tradition connected both passages with Exodus 19, a visionary dream postulated for Abraham during the theophany of Gen 15:17, Deut 33:2, and the LXX of Ezek 43:2.
[681] Newsom, "Merkabah Exegesis," 29.

Newsom observes that in Ezekiel's parallel *merkabah* description, Ezekiel reads ובעומדם [יעמ]ודו, not ובשוכן [יעמ]ודו as in the *Shabbat Shirot*. She concludes that the allusion must instead come from Palm 68:17-20, where Yahweh ascends from Sinai with his myriad chariotry to "settle forever" (לשכן יה אלהים;אף יהוה ישכן נצח) "on high in his sanctuary" (עלית במרום;בקודש).[682]

The significance of these terms and phrases and their immediate association with the throne room of Yahweh, the head of Israel's divine council, must not be underestimated. Rather than reflecting a council whose former second-tier deities have been demoted to the status of angels, the throne room motifs point to a divine plurality. The plethora of references noted in the next section to אלים and plural אלוהים council members, as well as the royal language of divine princeship and vice regency, point in the same direction and buttress the contention of this chapter, that Israel's pre-exilic council of gods was a core belief for the sect at Qumran during the Second Temple period.

7.3 *The Members of the Divine Council*

There are a dramatic number of references—approximately 175— to plural gods (אלים or אלוהים) in the Qumran sectarian literature. Most of these references are not theologically neutral, but reflect beliefs held by the Qumran sect. That is, when the Qumran sectarian texts speak of divine pluralities, on relatively few occasions does the author use the words אלים or plural אלוהים to speak of idols or the religion of pagans. Rather, the term often occurs in titles of Yahweh, such as "God of gods," or in overt divine council contexts. It is also important to note that the notion of divine sonship (בנים) is preserved in many of these usages.

Just under half (approximately 80) of the 175 references to gods use the word אלים, alone or in explicit divine council phrases like בני אלים. Most of these citations occur in the War Scroll (1QM), the *Hodayot* (1QH), and the *Shabbat Shirot*. The following are samples of the phrases in which אלים is found:

<u>1QM (War Scroll)</u>:
"the assembly of **the gods** (עדת אלים) and the congregation of men" (1:10)
"the shout of **gods** and men" (1:11)

[682] Ibid., 29.

"the m]ighty ones of **the gods** are girding themselves for battl[e" (15:14)
"He (God) will joyfully light up the covenant of Israel . . . to exalt the authority of Michael among **the gods**" (17:7)[683]

<u>1QHodayot (Thanksgiving Scroll/Psalms to God)</u>:
"Who is like you among **the gods**, O Lord?" (15:28)
". . . among the **sons of the gods** and sons of [. . .] (1QHf. 2 1:3)
"[. . . the **so]ns of the gods**, to unite with the sons of heaven" (1QHf.2 1:10)
"You have humbled (11) **the gods** from the foundation [. . .] (24:10b-11)

<u>Shabbat Shirot</u>
"Give thanks, all **divine beings** of majesty, to the king of majesty" (4Q403, col.I:38)
"In the middle of the spirits of splendor, wonderful embroidered work, the forms of **the living gods** [ ] in the inner sanctuaries of the king, the forms of **the gods**, and the likeness of the holy of holies" (4Q403, frg. 14-15, col. I:7-8)

<u>Other Fragments</u>:
"with the **sons of the gods**" (4Q491f.24 1:4)
"all the hosts of **the gods**" (4Q503f.48 50 1:8)
"the hosts of **the gods**" (4Q503f.65 1:2)

Corresponding to the uses of אלים above, there are roughly 90 instances of אלוהים (plural) used in the sectarian material. Eight of these occurrences are in the phrase אלוהים חיים found in the *Shabbat Shirot*.[684] Apart from that interesting phrase, אלוהים is used in phrases that are quite similar to that of אלים:

"[They sing] wonderful psalms . . . and declare [the surpassing] glory of the King of **the gods**"[685] (4Q400 frg. 2 l.5)
"King of **the gods**" (4Q401 frgs. 1-2 l.5; 4Q402 frgs. 3-4 l.12)

"None of **the gods** understands what He has designed" (4Q402 frg. 3-4 lines 14-15)
"Lift His exaltation on high, **you gods** among the exalted **gods**" (4Q403 frg. 1 Col.1:33)

At this juncture it is appropriate to remind the reader of a passing comment from Chapter One, for its significance can now be more appreciated. In Chapter One of this study it was noted that there are only 11 instances in the entire Qumran corpus where [בני] אלים / אלוהים and מלאכים occur within fifty words of each other.[686] Eight of these occurrences have אלוהים construed as a singular, referring to the God of Israel.[687]

---

[683] The meaning of this phrase will be discussed subsequently, particularly with respect to the earlier discussion of Michael in Chapter Six of this study.
[684] This count is based not on the DSS database, but on Carol Newsom's concordance of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice (Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 392-395, 411).
[685] This phrase ("king of the gods") is significant for the concept of vice regency in the sectarian material. See the ensuing discussion.
[686] This statement reflects searches in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Reference Library*. The eleven instances where [בני] אלים / אלוהים and מלאכים occur within fifty words of each other are: 1Q28b (1QSb), col. IV; 4Q225, frg. 2, col. II; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II; 4Q405 frg. 19ABCD, line 7; 4Q405 frg. 20-21-22, col. II; 4Q405 frg. 23, col. I; 4Q510, frg. 1; 4Q511, frg. 2, col. I; 4Q511, frg. 10; 4Q511 frg. 35.

The three instances that remain, all appearing in the fragmentary text of 4Q405, do not clearly indicate that the terms are synonymous because of the fragmentary or obscure nature of this text.

4Q405 fragment 23, column 1, lines 1-8 contains references to "the gods/ divine beings" (lines 4,5) who praise God (line 6) in the heavenly temple. Line 8 reads as follows:[688]

בקול רנה במבואי אלי דעת בפתחי כבוד ובכול מוצאי מלאכי קודש לממשלתם

> ". . . with a voice of a song. Whenever the gods of knowledge enter by the portals of glory, and whenever the holy angels go out to their dominion."

Newsom notes that the phrases אלי דעת and מלאכי קודש are in separate but parallel hemistichs, though she does not consider the terms themselves parallel.[689] Part of the difficulty with seeing the terms themselves as parallel is the larger context of 4Q405, which describes the movement of the myriad heavenly beings within the complex of the heavenly temple and the *merkabah* throne that is situated within the temple. The temple in the *Shabbat Shirot* is composed of seven sanctuaries with multiple *debirim*. Complete understanding of the imagery is impossible, but some comprehension of the description is possible against the backdrop of Ezekiel 40-48.[690]

Since the *Shabbat Shirot* describes the various sanctuaries as concentric,[691] the "goings in and out" described in line 8 could refer to separate parts of the greater whole, and separate priestly duties of distinct classes of heavenly beings. In fact, Newsom favors a separation of the activities described, which favors a separation of these beings according to the kind of hierarchical class articulated in traditional divine council bureaucracy. She comments on line 8 that "both מבוא and מוצא can mean the act or place of coming in/going forth, but the verbal nuance is clearly preferable here."[692] Whether such a separation of priestly activities is justifiable or not, the text as it stands can be read as referring to separate entities "going in" and "coming out" at separate points of the temple complex, and so it is inconclusive with respect to equating its אלים and מלאכים.

[687] 1Q28b (1QSb), col. IV; 4Q225, frg. 2, col. II; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II; 4Q510, frg. 1; 4Q511, frg. 2, col. I; 4Q511, frg. 10; 4Q511 frg. 35.
[688] For the establishment of the text, see Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 322ff.
[689] Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 328.
[690] Ibid., 51.
[691] Ibid., 48-55.

The next fragment of 4Q405 that needs consideration is fragment 19ABCD, lines 5 through 7. Line 5 concerns the "figures of the shapes of divine beings (אלוהים)" which is part of the fragment's presumed description of the *debirim* and the chariot thrones. Lines 6 and 7 then add,

> living divine beings (אלוהים חיים) are all their construction, and the images of their figures are holy angels (מלאכים). From underneath (מתחת) the wondrous *d[ebirim]* comes the sound of quiet stillness, the div[ine bein]gs (אֹל[והי]םׄ) blessing . . .

Newsom notes immediately that, "the text is so extraordinarily obscure that one can scarcely specify with any confidence the subject of the passage."[693] Minimally, it is apparent that the lines in question concern the divine chariot throne. Elsewhere in the Shabbat Shirot "מתחת precedes a word for the divine throne."[694] The idea of praise coming from beneath the seat of the chariot throne is echoed in 4Q405 frags. 20-21-22, col. II:9, where the cherubim are behind the "voice." This may mean that in the *Shabbat Shirot* cherubim are considered אלוהים, which would in turn mean that *both* the terms אלוהים and מלאכים would be used in way foreign to the Hebrew Bible, where cherubim are not referred to by either term.

If this is the case, then the text is of little use for arguing an equation of these tiers within the divine council, since the Canaanite and pre-exilic Israelite councils are not composed of lion-like creatures that support the chariot throne.[695] However, the אלוהים that Newsom postulates at the end of the line is likely not there. As noted above, the middle three letters must be supplied, and the rest of the letters are very doubtful. If the word אלוהים is not present in the text, a secure correlation between the terms אלוהים and מלאכים is not possible. The fact that the אלוהים of line 5 are said to be "engraved" (מחוקקי) on heavenly "brickwork" and yet are "figures" (בדני) in line 1, and the מלאכים of line 6 are also "figures" (בדני) may point to an internal inconsistency. More likely, however, "the Sabbath Shirot do not present their conceptions with rationality or

---

[692] Ibid., 329.
[693] Ibid., 295.
[694] Ibid., 300. See 4Q405, frg. 22, line 9; 4Q405, frg. 46, line 3.
[695] Based on the relevant iconography found in Israel and Canaan, there is considerable agreement that cherubim were thought to be creatures of (winged) leonine appearance. See T.N. D. Mettinger, "Cherubim," *DDD,* 189-192.

sober exposition, or even sequential logic . . . [but rather] allusions to heavenly realia are incidental to descriptions of angelic praise."[696]

Finally, 4Q405 fragments 20-21-22, column II contains references to a variety of beings moving with and flitting within and without the divine chariot throne, much like the description in Ezekiel 1 and 10. In the biblical vision, the creatures who support the throne (cherubim) are quite distinct from the fiery beings associated with the coals. In the elaboration of that vision at Qumran, it is most likely that beings, including אלוהים and מלאכים, were added to embellish the description, not to equate all the types.

The point of these brief observations is that the sectarian texts at Qumran that are intact and lucid clearly distinguish the beings of the heavenly host, thereby retaining the hierarchical tiers of the pre-exilic divine council of the Hebrew Bible. Were there unmistakable overlap between the words אלוהים / אלים [בני] and מלאכים at Qumran, one could argue that the divine council's second tier of gods either had been downgraded to the status of angels, or at least that such an interpretive understanding was in the process of emerging. Such does not appear to be the case.

The last chapter of this study, relating to non-sectarian texts witnessed at Qumran and other Second Temple compositions, does in fact indicate that the term מלאכים eventually evolved into an umbrella designation for any member of the heavenly host while retaining clear marks of the pre-exilic council hierarchy, but the sectarian material cannot be said to clearly indicate the same. In fact, the word מלאך / מלאכים occurs only ten times in the *Shabbat Shirot*, which is quite surprising given the subject matter of the heavenly temple and liturgy.[697] This minimal vocabulary, when juxtaposed with the strikingly high number of references to a council of אלים [בני] in the sectarian texts at Qumran argues strongly for pre-exilic council continuity.

Perhaps even more telling is the Qumran community's belief that its own community of the faithful could join the heavenly council as members in a mystical process of human deification. This belief in a divinized human council is based in part on earlier biblical passages and the position of Israelites as divine sons. The particulars

---

[696] Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 49.
[697] Ibid., 241.

of this theology will be discussed in detail momentarily, but it is sufficient at this point to note that the hope of the Qumran community was not to become heavenly creatures, but divine sons of the Most High.

Continuing the terminology found in sectarian texts for council members, the Qumran sectarian material uses princely titulary of heavenly beings in a number of texts. The familiar term of Daniel 8 and 10, שׂר(ים), is rare in the *Shabbat Shirot* (three occurrences, and all lack text-critical certainty).[698] It occurs nearly two dozen times in other sectarian texts, but nearly always with respect to the human military hierarchy of the War Scroll (1QM).

Of the three occurrences of שר in the *Shirot*, two occur in relative contextual isolation due to the fragmentation of the text. 4Q401, fragment 6:4 contains the phrase שרי קודש ("holy princes"). Though there is little else to add to the phrase, it is important because, as Newsom notes, the phrase is linked to the heavenly priesthood and thus provides a parallel to the term as used in the book of Daniel.[699] 4Q400, fragment 1, col. 1:12 has the reconstructed phrase [. . . ה]מה שרי ("they are princes"). Though again merely a scant reference, other lines in that text describe the activity of the heavenly beings in the heavenly temple (see below). The third instance of שר is found in 4Q403, fragment 1, col. II:22-24, and is the only example occurring in a line of reasonable length:

> 22 . . . seven priest[hoods] in the wondrous sanctuary (מקדש פלא) for the seven holy councils . . . 23 the prince, the angels of the King (השר מלאכי מלך) in the wonderful dwellings (במעוני פלא). And the insightful knowledge of the seven . . . 24 chief (רוש) [. . .] from the priest of the inner sanctum (מכוהן קרוב). And the chiefs (וראשי) of the council of the King (עדת המלך) in the assembly (קהל) [. . .].[700]

Due to the fragmentary nature of even this sample, it is not possible to determine whether השר is the singular chief (רוש) over the angels and other chiefs, or the priest of the inner sanctum. Even if השר is to be correlated with the singular chief in this text, it is still not clear whether he is a distinct being above the other chiefs or one of their number singled out for some unspecified reason in the text. What can be discerned from

[698] Ibid. The singular שׂר does occur elsewhere in sectarian material, though. See the ensuing discussion concerning Michael and Melchizedek.
[699] Ibid., 28. See the ensuing discussion for more on this connection.
[700] Ibid., 230. The translation is Newsom's.

this text is that there are seven priesthoods of heavenly beings which serve in seven holy councils in the heavenly temple.[701] Other *Shabbat Shirot* texts inform us that there are seven דבירים ("sanctuaries") and one inner sanctum and seven נשיאי רוש ("chief princes") within these דבירים. The above text may suggest that the inner sanctum has a special, elevated divine priest of the "most holy" inner sanctum. Given that the seven councils of the *Shirot* correspond to the seven priesthoods, each headed by its own lead heavenly prince,[702] it appears reasonable that the inner דביר, the sanctuary of the Most High himself, is administrated by an elevated singular prince (השר) who is the singular chief (רוש). Nevertheless, the fragmentary nature of the evidence prevents such a conclusion. The fact that, in Daniel, Michael is called השר־הגדול should also give the reader pause to argue this broken text allows the conclusion that the rare reference to השר speaks of a lone sovereign under Yahweh, since Michael is also referred to as one among equals (אַחַד הַשָּׂרִים הָרִאשֹׁנִים; "one of the chief princes").

The most common princely or hierarchical titles for heavenly beings in the sectarian literature are נשיא[703] ("prince") and ראש[704] ("chief"), both of which are most frequently used in the plural and in tandem with each other (e.g., נשיאי רוש, ראשי נשיאים; "chief princes"). These terms are rare outside the Qumran *Shirot*.[705] Scholars have noticed that these terms (and perhaps the division of the heavenly host into seven councils and priesthoods) are drawn from the book of Numbers, perhaps as an analogy to the division of Israel into twelve tribes.[706] At Qumran נשיא is adopted as a political or military title for both human and heavenly leaders at the final conflict. In the War Scroll the terms נשיאים appears in apposition to ראשים, which is also the case in Numbers.[707] Despite being drawn from the book of Numbers, the functions of the groups denoted by these terms differ in Numbers and the *Shirot*. The most significant difference is the priestly function of the

---

[701] The above text is mirrored by 4Q405, fragments 8-9, lines 5b-6a, which forms the phrasing "chief princes, priests of the wondrous . . . ([ראש]י נשיאי [כ]ה׳נ׳ת פל[א]). The superscripted letters are a scribal hand.
[702] Morray-Jones, "The Temple Within," 411; Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 26-34. See page 31 of Newsom for a collection of the "seven" phrases in the *Shabbat Shirot*.
[703] 4Q400, frg. 1, col. II:14; frg. 3, col. II:2; 4Q401, frg. 23:1; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I: 1, 10, 21, etc.; col. II:20-21; 4Q405, frg. 13:2-5, 7.
[704] 4Q401, frg. 14, col. I:6; 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I:31, 34; frg. 1, col. II:3, 11, 16, 20-21, 24; 4Q405, frg. 23, col. II: 10-12.
[705] Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 32.

heavenly נשיאים / ראשים alongside the military/political task. This combination of priest and military leader is not uncommon in Jewish angelology, as the traditions of Michael and Melchizedek attest.

For purposes of comparison to the divine council bureaucracy discussed in Chapter Two of this study, it is important to note that there are several references in the *Shabbat Shirot* that indicate that the נשיאים and the ראשים exercise council rulership, are considered "royal," and serve as the divine high priests of the heavenly councils described at Qumran.[708]

For example, just as in Daniel, there are plural thrones in the heavenly temple of the *Shirot*, which is not at all surprising in light of the plural chariots. In 4Q405, frg. 23, col. I:3-4, we read of "His glorious royal thrones (כסאיכה כבוד מלכותו[709]) and all the assembly (וכול עדת) of those who serve . . . wondrously. The wondrous divine beings (אלוהים) will not be shaken forever." These same beings are "chiefs of the heights" (מרום)[710] and "those who sit upon the heights" (יושבי מרומי רומים).[711]

In regard to the priestly designation, 4Q405, fragment 23, col. II the "chiefs (ראשי) of wondrous raiment" are described as wearing high priestly dress (אפודיהם). As Newsom notes, this connection would explain the pairing of the titles נשיאי רוש and נשיאי משנה in priestly duties (the only difference being rank).[712] As such, there would be seven chief princes over the seven divine councils within the heavenly temple in the *Shabbat Shirot*. Most of the Second Temple literature that ventures angelological speculation has the number of archangels at seven. This has prompted the conclusion that "it is virtually certain that the seven chief princes are to be identified with the seven archangels.[713] Overt reference is made to "the chiefs of the realm of

---

706 Ibid., 31-32.
707 Ibid., 32. See 1QM col. III: 3, 15, 16; IV: 1; V:1 and Num 1:16; 7:2; 10:14; 36:1.
708 Ibid., 33. After comparing several lines of *Shirot* fragments, Newsom concludes that the two phrases are used interchangeably (*The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 36).
709 The dots above the two letters in this form indicate scribal corrections (which are plainly visible in a photograph of the scroll). As Newsom notes, "The scribe originally wrote כסאיכה בוד, then corrected to כסאי כבוד, implying an aural misinterpretation of כסא כבוד or of a masculine plural homonym, כסאי כבוד. In biblical Hebrew the plural form is always כסאות, but the Sabbath Shirot not infrequently display a preference for masculine plural forms of nouns where biblical Hebrew knows only the feminine plural" (Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 325).
710 4Q405, frg. 4-5:2.
711 MasShirShabb, col. I:9.
712 Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice,* 33. In this regard, Newsom notes the existence of deputy priests alongside high priests in the Hebrew Bible (2 Kgs 23:4; 25:18) and elsewhere at Qumran (1QM col. II:1).
713 Ibid., 34. Newsom comments that there are sources that have only four archangels, such as 1QM, col. IX:14-16. Some texts also

the holy ones of the king of holiness" (ראשי ממלכות קדושים למלך הקודש)[714] and "chiefs of the council of the king in the congregation (ראשי עֿת המלך בקהל) . . ."[715]

These chief princes are interchanged with the terms אלהים and אלים (בני), but restriction of the second tier of the council to only seven divine beings seems unlikely, since the book of Daniel, the other major Second Temple period source for describing Jewish beliefs about the heavenly host, links the princes to geographic realms. If this is the case with the sectarian material, it would make better sense (there are more than seven Gentile nations) to see the seven chief princes in the *Shirot* as holding positions of authority over the other geographic divine princes.[716] Nevertheless, the princes in the *Shirot* and the rest of the sectarian material are not linked to geographic rule, likely because the context of the sectarian material is so different than the book of Daniel. The concern of the War Scroll is the final battle and arrangement of the heavenly army into fighting ranks, and the *Shirot* are focused on worship within the heavenly temple. This divergence from what are by now consistent patterns of council imagery does not threaten the idea that the sectarian material perpetuates the pre-exilic divine council due to the striking correspondences elsewhere, particularly in the discussion of vice regency below.

The last term for council members at Qumran that requires brief acknowledgement is קדושים. In a manner consistent with biblical texts, when קדושים appears in the sectarian material with respect to a heavenly being, it serves as a broad designation for any member of the heavenly council, regardless of rank.[717] Moreover, as was the case with the book of Daniel, קדושים in the Qumran sectarian material is used in reference to both

---

alternate between four and seven archangels (cp. 1 Enoch 9:1 [four] and 1 Enoch 20 [seven]). Newsom speculates that the number seven predominates in the *Shabbat Shirot* as part of a general preoccupation with the number seven.

[714] 4Q405, frg. 23, col. II:11. Newsom (*The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 339) judges the second ממלכות as a dittograph, but adds that "the repetition of a word may indicate a distributive sense ("every realm") or a superlative sense ("the highest realm").

[715] 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II:24. Newsom's edition has the ד raised on p. 226, but not on p. 241. The photograph has the raised letter.

[716] In the discussion of 1 Enoch (Chapter Eight) it is noted that the Watchers are grouped by tens into twenty groups, the leaders being referred to as "dekadarchs" (cf. *1 En.* 6:7-8). If the seven archangels of the Enochian literature are also dekadarchs, then the seven archangels would be responsible for seventy other divine beings, which in turn corresponds to the seventy nations of Deut 32:8-9 (cf. the list of nations in Genesis 10-11 when the earth was divided). It is interesting to speculate that the seven chief princes of the Qumran material might be the seven archangels of the Enochian texts.

[717] L. Dequeker, "The 'Saints of the Most High' in Qumran and Daniel"; C.H.W. Brekelmans, "The Saints of the Most High and Their Kingdom," *OtSt* 14 (1965): 305-329.

humans and heavenly beings. By way of illustration, consider the uses of קדושים in the following sample texts:

קדושים = heavenly beings:

"For you have a multitude of holy ones in the heavens, and the host of angels in your exalted dwelling to pr[aise] your [name]" (1QM 12:1)
"and you, O God, are awe[some] in your dominion, and the company of your holy ones is in our midst for eternal support . . ." (1QM 12:7)
". . . the m]ighty ones of the gods are girding themselves for batt[le, and] the formation[s of the] h[o]ly ones [are rea]dying themselves for a day of [vengeance . . .] (1QM 15:14-15)

קדושים = human beings:
". . . who is like your people Israel, whom you have chosen for yourself from all the peoples of the lands; the people of the holy ones of the covenant" (1QM 10:9-10)
"and on the trumpets of the camps they shall write: the peace of God in the camps of his holy ones" (1QM 3:4-5)

7.4 *The Divine Vice-Regent of the Council*

There are a number of vivid phrases in the *Shabbat Shirot* that speak of a ruler of the plural אלהים / אלים, the divine princes of the divine council at Qumran. In 4Q400 one reads of the "king of the princes" (מלך נשיאי . . .).[718] 4Q403, frg. 1. col. II refers to a "chief of the divine beings" (אלוהים) who is over other "chiefs of the realm of the spirits."[719] Interestingly, this is also the *Shirot* text that contains the rare reference to the singular prince (השׂר) and the singular "chief priest of the inner sanctum" (רוש מכוהן קרוב).[720] This chief of the divine beings is most likely not God, because line 2 references God's footstool and the plural chiefs who surround it prior to mentioning this singular chief subsequently in line 5. Other texts speak of the "king of the heights (מרומים),"[721] the "king of the holy ones,"[722] the "king of the holy ones of the council,"[723] and the "king of kings over all the eternal councils" (מלך מלכ[ים] לכול סודי עולמים).[724]

[718] 4Q400, frg. 1, col. II:14.
[719] 4Q403, frg. 1, col. II:1-5 (esp. lines 3, 5).
[720] Line 24 of the same text. The translation is Newsom's.
[721] 4Q403, frg. 3:1.
[722] 4Q400, frg. 1, col. I:8.
[723] 11QShabShir, frg. q:3. This is my own restoration. See the line in Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 426 (concordance).
[724] 4Q403, frg. 1, col. I:34.

The last reference above is noteworthy due to the multiple use of the royal rulership term, "king." It is natural for us to consider that the "king of kings over all the eternal councils" is God Himself. Indeed, Newsom operates from this assumption, as she inserts "h[e is the God of gods]" (הו]א אל אלים[) before the phrase referring to the king of the kings.[725] This interpretation could be the case, and such insertions, drawn as they are from other fragments in the *Shirot*, have coherence. Nevertheless, in the context of this study it is significant that the most commonly used designation (seven times)[726] for a singular head of the council(s) in the *Shirot* is a phrase rich with pre-exilic divine council meaning: the "king of the gods" (מלך אלוהים).[727] Readers should recall that this is Baal's title in the council at Ugarit, a title that authorizes his role as vice-regent of the council, albeit under El's ultimate sovereignty. While none of the six instances of this title clearly distinguish the "king of the gods" from God Himself,[728] in view of the plethora of references to plural אלוהים / אלים in the sectarian texts, explicit council language in the scrolls, and the other phrases that describe a singular prince or high priest of the council, it is possible that this title refers to a divine vice-regent ruling at the behest of God. The question then is, who might this individual be?

Scholarly discussions of any sort of divine figure (other than the God of Israel) in the Qumran sectarian material nearly always focus on Melchizedek and the archangel Michael, as well as presumed relationships between them. Both figures are specifically mentioned in the Qumran material, leading scholars to propose that either one or the other leads God's heavenly host, or perhaps the two may be equated. It is the judgment of this study that Melchizedek and Michael should not be equated in the sectarian texts from Qumran and that Melchizedek was considered by the Qumran sect to be the shadowy divine council vice-regent of early texts of the Hebrew Bible.

---

[725] Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 217.
[726] 4Q400, frg. 1, col. II:7; frg. 2:5; 4Q401, frg. 1:5; 4Q402, frg. 3, col. II:12; 4Q405, frg. 23, col. I:13; frg. 24:3; 11QShabbShir, frags. H-1:6.
[727] Three of the occurrences are partially reconstructed and could read מלך אלים. However, their surrounding context is always quite similar or identical to complete readings that have מלך אלוהים.
[728] That is, there are no texts that clearly have God and the king of the gods as separate beings in one scene.

There are several texts considered below that relate to these matters. Perhaps the most important is 11QMelchizedek. This fragmentary scroll from Cave 11 draws upon several texts from the Hebrew Bible. 11QMelchizedek, columns 2 and 3, reads:[729]

Column 2

1 [...] ? [...]

2 [...] And as for what he said: "In this year of jubilee, [you shall return, each one, to his respective property" (**Lev 25:13**), as is written: "This is] 3 the manner (of effecting) the [release: every creditor shall release what he lent [to his neighbor. He shall not coerce his neighbor or his brother when] the release for El [has been proclaimed]" (**Deut 15:2**). 4 [Its inter]pretation for the last days refers to the captives, about whom he said: "To proclaim liberty to the captives (**Isa 61:1**). And he will make 5 their rebels prisoners [...] and of the inheritance of Melchizedek, for [...] and they are the inheri[tance of Melchi]zedek, who 6 will make them return. He will proclaim liberty for them, to free them from [the debt] of all their iniquities. And this will [happen] 7 in the first week of the jubilee which follows the ni[ne] jubilees. And the day [of aton]ement is the end of the tenth jubilee 8 in which atonement will be made for all the sons of [God] and for the men of the lot of Melchizedek. [And in the heights] he will decla[re in their] favor according to their lots; for 9 it is the time of the "year of favor" for Melchizedek . . . holy ones of El through the rule of judgment, as is written 10 about him in the songs of David, who said: "a divine being (אלוהים) stands up in the assem[bly of El,] in the midst of the gods (אלוהים) he judges" (**Ps 82:1**). And about him he said: And concerning him He said, 11 "to the heights (למרום), return (שׁוב)! El judges the peoples" (**Ps 7:8-9**), As for what he sa[id: "How long will yo[u judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah" (**Ps 82:2**). 12 Its interpretation concerns Belial and the spirits of his lot, who were rebels [all of them] turning aside from the commandments of El [to commit evil]. 13 But, Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of El's judgments [on this day, and they shall be freed from the hands] of Belial and from the hands of all the sp[irits of his lot]. 14 Allied with him (shall be) all "the gods of [righteousness" ([אלי [הצדק **Isa 61:3**). The . . .] is that wh[ich . . . al]l the sons of El. . . . 15 This is the day of [peace about which God] spoke [of old through the words of Isa]iah the prophet, who said: "How beautiful 16 upon the mountains are the feet of the herald who announces peace, who brings [good] news, [who announces salvat]ion, saying to Zion: 'your God (אלוהים) [reigns'"] (**Isa 52:7**). 17 Its interpretation: The mountains are the prophet[s ...] 18 And the herald is [the ano]inted of the spirit (מֹשוח הרוח)[730] about whom Dan[iel] spoke [. . .] and the herald of] 19 good news who announ[ces salvation] is the one about whom it is written, ["to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, the day of the vengeance of our God;] to comfo[rt all who mourn" (**Isa 61:2-3**). 20 Its interpretation: "he is to inst[r]uct them in all the ages of the worl[d...] 21 in truth. [...] 22 [...] it has been turned away from Belial and it [...] 23 [...] in the judgments of El, as is written about him: ["who says to Zi]on: 'your God (אלוהים) reigns'" (**Isa 52:7**). ["Zi]on" is 24 [the congregation of all the sons of justice, who] establish the covenant, those who avoid walking [on the pa]th of the people. "Your God (אלוהים)" is 25 [Melchizedek, who will fr]ee [them] from the hand of Belial. And as for what he said: "You shall blow the hor[n in every] land" (**Lev 25:9**).

Column 3 (only small pieces)

1 [Its interpretation ...]
2 and you know [...]
3 God [...]
4 and many [...]
5 [...] Melchizedek [...]
6 the law for them [...] the hand [...] and he will announce [...]

---

[729] Column 1 is not extant, save for one partially illegible line written down the margin. 11QMelchizedek was first published by A.S. Van der Woude, "Melchisedek als himmlische Erlösergestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran Hohle XI," *OtSt* 14 (1965): 354-373. The text was later re-examined by E. Puech, "Notes sur le manuscript del XIQMelchîsédeq," *RQ* 12 (1987): 483-512. See also P. J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchirešha*ʿ (CBQMS 10; Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 3-23.

[730] The reading of מֹשוח הרוח rather than מֹשיח הרוח was established via computer enhancement by T. H. Lim, "11QMelch, Luke 4, and the Dying Messiah," *JJS* 43 (1992): 91.

7 they shall devour Belial with fire [...] Belial, and they shall rebel [...]

As many scholars have noted, the author utilized the pesher of interpretation found so frequently among Dead Sea Scrolls, quoting passages from Deuteronomy, Leviticus, and Second Isaiah.[731] Line 18 may also have included a quotation of Daniel ("And the herald is [the ano]inted of the spirit (משוח הרוח) about whom Dan[iel] spoke . . .)." Most scholars hold that the reference is to the anointed prince (משיח נגיד) of Dan 9:25, but M. Wise understands the reference to speak of Dan 9:26, "an anointed one (משיח) shall be cut off." J. Collins contends, on the other hand, that the phrase משוח הרוח is "obviously derived from Isaiah 61," apparently suggesting that the author was not intending to quote Daniel, but merely tied the description of Isa 61:1 to Daniel 9.[732] In light of the wording that this anointing is of the spirit and 11QMelchizedek's other uses of Isaiah 61, Collins' suggestion seems most cogent.

Several aspects of the scroll's contents and pesher exegesis are noteworthy for the purposes of this study, and provide a backdrop for the concept of divine vice regency in the scroll.

First, the text quotes Psalm 82 twice, and clearly identifies Melchizedek as a divine being; according to the author he is the singular אלוהים of Ps 82:1. Line 11 also references the heights, establishing that the divine being referenced in the text along with the God of Israel has some connection to the divine council.[733] It is also apparent that, in Qumran theology, the time of the end was when the corrupt gods of Psalm 82 would finally

---

[731] James R. Davila, "Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God," in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: Challenge or Response?* (ed. S. Daniel Breslauer; Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 221; M. Miller, "The Function of Isaiah 61:1-2 in 11QMelchizedek," *JBL* 88 (1969): 469.

[732] John John J. Collins, "The Herald of Good Tidings: Isaiah 61:1-3 and Its Actualization in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders* (ed. Craig Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 230.

[733] Although the manuscript clearly reads a *waw* in this verbal form (from שׁוב), its sense in the context ("return . . .") has given commentators difficulty. It is possible that the form was originally שׁיבה, meaning "sit" or "preside (upon the heights)," a picture consistent with the divine council imagery in Psalm 82. Dahood speculated that שׁוב might be a bi-form of ישׁב, but there is little evidence for this. This writer's own opinion of this command is that it is less problematic if one understands the "heights" to be a metaphor for Zion, and not for Melchizedek's point of origin in the heavens. That Zion is spoken of in these terms is apparent from passages like Isa 33:5; Ezek 17:23; 20:40; and 34:14. To these verses one needs to compare the references to Zion as being on the ירכתי צפון to complete the divine council imagery (e.g., Ps 48:3). While it is true that one also comes across references where invaders come upon Israel *from* the ירכתי צפון, it is possible to view *both* types of passages as referring to the same thing: Zion is the earthly city of the nation of Israel, but it is also the place where God dwells and holds council.

receive their punishment.[734] Melchizedek, then, was viewed as a divine eschatological judge whose victory would usher in the rule of God (El) over the earth.

Further, since it is Melchizedek who proclaims the דרור in lines 6 of the scroll, it is logical to conclude that he is also the herald of lines 18-19.[735] Note those lines below, along with the interplay and differentiation of the word אלוהים to both God and Melchizedek, and my own italicized notations:

> 6 . . . He (*Melchizedek*) will proclaim liberty for them, to free them from [the debt] of all their iniquities. And this will [happen] . . .
>
> 9 it is the time of the "year of favor" for Melchizedek . . . holy ones of El through the rule of judgment, as is written 10 about him (*Melchizedek*) in the songs of David, who said: "a divine being (אלוהים) stands in the assem[bly of El,] in the midst of the gods (אלוהים) he judges."
>
> 17 Its interpretation: The mountains are the prophet[s ...] 18 And the herald (*Melchizedek*) is [the ano]inted of the spirit about whom Dan[iel] spoke [. . .] and the herald of] 19 good news who announ[ces salvation] is the one about whom it is written, ["to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, the day of the vengeance of our God;] to comfo[rt all who mourn" 20 Its interpretation: "he (*Melchizedek*) is to inst[r]uct them in all the ages of the worl[d...] 21 in truth. [...] 22 [...] it has been turned away from Belial and it [...] 23 [...] in the judgments of El, as is written about him: ["who says to Zi]on: (*i.e., Melchizedek, the herald, says to Zion*) 'your God (אלוהים) reigns'. [Zi]on is 24 [the congregation of all the sons of justice, who] establish the covenant, those who avoid walking [on the pa]th of the people. Your divine being (אלוהים) is 25 [Melchizedek, who will fr]ee [them] from the hand of Belial . . .

The divine identity of the herald of lines 18-19 is drawn from the context of line 6 and its juxtaposition to line 9's application of Ps 82:1 to Melchizedek and the allusion back to Isaiah 61. As the herald of lines 18-19, Melchizedek is seen as the previously unidentified being who announces to Zion that "your God (אלוהים) reigns." As noted in Chapter Four, this quotation comes from Isa 52:7, which is paralleled by Isa 40:9, which in turn is a chapter that involves the activity of the divine council. The identification of the herald Melchizedek as אלוהים is also reinforced by lines 24-25, where the one who frees the people from the hand of Belial (viz., Melchizedek from lines 12-13) is referred to as "your אלוהים." Hence 11QMelchizedek reveals the belief at Qumran that there is an אלוהים besides the God of Israel (El) who, as a member of the divine council, is

---

[734] Line 14's מרומים has been reconstructed on the basis of למרום in line 11, as well as the quotation of Ps 7:7-8 [Heb. 8,9] in line 11.

[735] John J. Collins and others dispute this, arguing that the herald is either a "prophetic precursor of Melchizedek" or perhaps the Teacher of Righteousness from the Qumran sect (John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 230-231). Collins and others, however, have failed to interact with the work of scholars who articulate the divine council context of Deutero-Isaiah and its importance for any discussion of the herald. There is also the identification of the prophets with the mountains—not the herald—in 11QMelchizedek itself. Collins' main argument is the "anointing" language elsewhere in Qumran material applied to prophets and the Teacher. By Collins' own admission, however, "anointing" in 11QMelchizedek may speak of a priestly role, and may only denote an appointment without any reference to the prophetic office (John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 227). Moreover, observing the references to anointing does not address either of the two issues above.

chosen to pronounce and dispense judgment on the corrupt sons of God (cf. the use of Ps 82:2 in line 11) on that eschatological day.

Second, Melchizedek at Qumran was more than an eschatological judge; he was also the herald who announced the coming judgment. Scholars have taken note that the description of the herald of good news of Isaiah 61 bears "clear echoes" of the servant of the Lord in Isaiah 42 and 49.[736] For example, the herald of Isaiah 61, and hence of 11QMelchizedek, is anointed by the spirit (61:1a) to "proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners" (61:1b) and "to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (61:2a). God says of the servant of Isaiah 42, "I have put my spirit upon him" (42:1) and the servant is appointed "to open the eyes that are blind, to release prisoners from the dungeon, and from prison those who sit in darkness" (42:7). Isa 49:7-8 references a "time of favor" and a "day of salvation" in connection with the release of prisoners as well. Indeed, the connections are so tight that some scholars have argued Isaiah 61 is a sort of commentary or actualization of the servant of Deutero-Isaiah.[737]

In regard to the herald role of the divine Melchizedek, I proposed in Chapter Three of this study that the proceedings in Psalm 82 should not be viewed as evincing an antiquated polytheism, where El and Yahweh were separate. Rather, either Yahweh-El was both judge and prosecutor, or the psalm described Yahweh-El as judge and an unidentified divine being from the council as the prosecutor, the one who accuses the gods of corruption and announces their sentence. 11QMelchizedek reflects the latter option. The scroll demonstrates a belief at Qumran that a second divine being would both announce judgment and dispense that justice in the eschatological day. On the basis of hints of the divine council in Second Isaiah, Chapter Four also put forth the idea that the herald (מבשׂר) of Second Isaiah was very likely an unidentified divine council member. The conflation of the herald in Isaiah 61 with the identification of the herald as divine being (lines 18-19) and the fact that this divine being speaks the words of Isa 52:7 (cf. 40:9) demonstrates that the author of 11QMelchizedek understood the herald of Second Isaiah as a divine council member.

[736] John J. Collins, "Isaiah 61:1-3," 226.
[737] W. A. M. Beuken, "Servant and Herald of Good Tidings: Isaiah 61 as an Interpretation of Isaiah 40-55," in *The Book of Isaiah: Le Livre d'Isaie* (ed. J. Vermeylen; BETL 81; Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1989), 411-442.

Third, the herald of 11QMelchizedek is "anointed." While "anointing" can refer to appointment as a herald or prophet (see below) in the Hebrew Bible, it also refers to rulership / kingship and the high priestly office. Melchizedek naturally fills both roles as king-priest (Gen 14; Ps 110).

Since the anointed one of Isaiah 61 is told to announce (בשר) good news to the oppressed and proclaim liberty to the captives, he is often identified by modern scholars as the prophet. J. Collins defends this view on the basis that, though rare, the idea of prophets being anointed can be found in the Hebrew Bible[738] and other Dead Sea Scrolls refer to prophets as "anointed ones."[739] Surprisingly, this perspective overlooks the clear reading of 11QMelchizedek itself. Lines 17-18 read: "Its interpretation: The mountains are the prophet[s ...] 18 And the herald is [the ano]inted of the spirit (משׂוח הרוח)." These lines distinguish the anointed one from the prophets, and so the notion that the anointed one is the Isaianic prophet cannot be sustained.

The imagery certainly seems obscure to modern thinking: an anointed herald "stands" upon the prophets (mountains) to proclaim the good tidings to Zion. This "standing" atop the prophets (mountains) should elicit joy, for the feet of the herald are "beautiful." The midrashic point could be that the good news of the return at the mouth of the herald simultaneously liberates Mount Zion and validates her prophets. Lines 23-24 of 11QMelchizedek might connect the prophets in such a way (". . . 'Zion' is [the congregation of all the sons of justice, who] establish the covenant"). Whatever the correct understanding of the imagery, the text itself distinguishes the prophets from the anointed one.

Fourth, several scholars have discerned a priestly connection between the anointing of the herald and the fact that the liberation proclaimed in Isaiah 61 and 11QMelchizedek is also proclaimed in Leviticus 25. While it is true that Leviticus 25 is not the main point of reference for the midrash of the scroll, it is the starting point.[740] As M. Miller has pointed out, it is because of the common theme of דרור between Leviticus 25 and Isaiah 61 that the latter is brought into the discussion.[741] Moreover, as Collins has noted, "the liberation is not economic but relief from the burden of sin, an idea that may be suggested by the reference to the Day of Atonement in

---

738 See 1 Kgs 19:16; Ps 105:15.

739 See CD 2:12; 6:1; 1QM 11:7.

740 C. Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Second Isaiah* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970), 66-94.

741 M. Miller, "The Function of Isaiah 61:1-2," 467-469.

Leviticus 25:9" in line 25, which marks the tenth jubilee.[742] This observation highlights the priestly role of the anointed herald, which in turn makes the Qumranic interpretation that the herald is Melchizedek quite understandable. In fact, one of the fragmentary occurrences of the name of Melchizedek in the *Shabbat Shirot* specifically references "Melchizedek, priest in the assembly of God" (. . . מלכי]צדק כוהן בעד[ת . . .).[743]

Fifth, lines 11-14 of 11QMelchizedek considers the corrupt gods of Psalm 82 to be those divine beings who serve Belial and who, according to the War Scroll, will fight with Belial at the end of days:

> As for what he sa[id, "How long will yo[u judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah" (**Ps 82:2**). 12 Its interpretation concerns Belial and the spirits of his lot, who were rebels [all of them] turning aside from the commandments of El [to commit evil]. 13 But, Melchizedek will carry out the vengeance of El's judgments [on this day, and they shall be freed from the hands] of Belial and from the hands of all the sp[irits of his lot]. 14 Allied with him (shall be) all "the gods (אלוהים) of [righteousness" (**Isa 61:3**).

According to the scroll, Melchizedek is the one chosen by God to defeat Belial and his hordes. Line 14 notes that Melchizedek's army will consist of other divine beings, the "gods of [righteousness]." As such, the divine Melchizedek functions as God's military commander and is placed in arch-opposition to Belial in this scroll.

Another significant fragmentary Qumran scroll that details the eschatological herald is 4Q521, specifically fragment 2, column II. The translation and key Hebrew terminology are as follows:[744]

> 1 . . . heaven and earth will obey his anointed one
> 2 [and all th]at is in them will not turn away from the commandments of holy ones.
> 3 You who seek the Lord (אדני), strengthen yourselves in his service.
> 4 Is it not in this that you will find the Lord (אדני), all who hope in their hearts?
> 5 For the Lord (אדני) will seek out the faithful ones (חסידים) and call the righteous by name,
> 6 and his spirit will hover over the poor and he will renew the faithful (אמונים) by might.
> 7 For he will glorify the faithful ones (חסידים) on the throne of an eternal kingdom (כסא מלכות עד),
> 8 releasing captives, giving sight to the blind, and raising up those who are bo[wed down].
> 9 Forever I will cleave to [those who] hope, and in his kindness . . .
> 10 The fru[it of a] good [wor]k will not be delayed for anyone . . .
> 11 and the glorious things that have not taken place the Lord (אדני) will do as he s[aid]
> 12 for he will heal the wounded, give life to the dead, and preach (יבשׂר) good news to the poor
> 13 and he will [sat]isfy the [weak] ones and lead those who have been cast out and enrich the hungry.

---

[742] John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 229-230.
[743] The text cited is 4Q401, frg.11:3. Newsom notes that this line is "strongly reminiscent of 11QMelch, ii:10" (Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 134). See also Davila, "Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God," 223.
[744] The translation is based on that of John J. Collins ("A Herald of Good Tidings," 233) with a few of my own more literal renderings to

The connections between 4Q521 and Isaiah 61 and 11QMelchizedek are obvious. Several observations have crucial significance. First, a reader would assume from the outset that the God of Israel is the one called "Lord" in the text despite the absence of the divine name. With this supposition I would agree. Yet in both Isaiah 61:1-3 and 11QMelchizedek it is the herald who performs what "the Lord" does in 4Q521. On the other hand, in Ps 146:5b-8, we read

5 אַשְׁרֵי שֶׁאֵל יַעֲקֹב בְּעֶזְרוֹ שִׂבְרוֹ עַל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו׃
6 עֹשֶׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַיָּם וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־בָּם הַשֹּׁמֵר אֱמֶת לְעוֹלָם׃
7 עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפָּט לָעֲשׁוּקִים נֹתֵן לֶחֶם לָרְעֵבִים יְהוָה מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים׃
8 יְהוָה פֹּקֵחַ עִוְרִים יְהוָה זֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים יְהוָה אֹהֵב צַדִּיקִים׃

> 5 How blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in Yahweh his God, [6] who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; [7] who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. Yahweh sets the prisoners free. [8] Yahweh opens the eyes of the blind; Yahweh raises up those who are bowed down; Yahweh loves the righteous.

In Psalm 146 it is unmistakable that Yahweh is the one who performs the deliverance ascribed to the anointed one in Isaiah 61. While commentators would naturally argue that Israel's theology must have Yahweh as the ultimate power and deliverer, it is important to highlight the notion—discerned by those who wrote the Qumran texts under consideration—that the anointed one acts in the stead of Yahweh. That is, the anointed one is the special agent of God and, according to 11QMelchizedek, this one is an אלוהים. J. Collins is troubled by the interplay of 4Q521 and 11QMelchizedek, noting that:

> Grammatically, God is the subject of v. 12 [of 4Q521], but nowhere else is God the subject of the verb בשׂר in the Hebrew Bible. The verb refers to the activity of the herald or messenger, and so it would scarcely make sense to speak of God performing it directly. Consequently, the suspicion arises that God is supposed to act through an agent here . . . [but] no agent is made explicit at this point. Merely to insist on this point, however, is to fail to address the anomalous use of the verb יבשׂר. . . . If the presence of such an agent is not inferred, then neither the reference to the anointed one in v.1 nor the verb יבשׂר in v12 can be satisfactorily explained.[745]

I would submit that the use of יבשׂר is not "anomalous" if one understands the herald of these passages in Second Isaiah to be the divine vice-regent of God's council. The Qumran writers, against the backdrop of

---

illustrate the vocabulary for the sake of the discussion.

[745] John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 235-236.

their numerous references to the divine council and its second-tier אלוהים / אלים, draw on the council contexts of the passages in Second Isaiah discussed in Chapter Four and interpret them as describing a special agent of Yahweh—one who is an אלוהים and functions in Yahweh's place. If the anointed one of these passages and scrolls is the divine vice-regent acting as herald, judge, and deliverer as an extension of Yahweh, there is no grammatical problem. The grammar is not troublesome when one recalls that in the pre-exilic council El and the council were often considered one.[746] In fact the parallelism of lines 1-2 of 4Q521 suggests such an identification:

> 1 . . . heaven and earth will obey his anointed one (משׁיחו)
> 2 [and all th]at is in them will not turn away from the commandments of holy ones (קדושׁים).

The relationship of "anointed one" (משׁיחו) in line 1 and "holy ones" in line 2 (קדושׁים) has prompted some to propose that משׁיחו should be read as a plural and that the intended referent of both terms are priests.[747] As Collins notes, however, there is not a single case in the Qumran literature "where either term is used substantively as a noun with clear reference to priests in the plural, and neither [is there] any parallel for the idea that heaven and earth should obey priests. . . . The parallelism suggests that the anointed one enjoys a status comparable to the holy ones, or angels."[748] As noted earlier, Collins identifies the anointed herald as the prophet himself, but this explanation fails to account for the divine council contexts of the herald references in Second Isaiah and the relationship of 4Q521 and 11QMelchizedek, where the herald is an אלוהים.

To summarize the contents of 11QMelchizedek and 4Q521 as they relate to the divine council and divine vice regency, the Qumran sectarian scrolls noted thus far reflect the following beliefs: (1) Ps 82:1 spoke of a divine being (אלוהים) separate from Yahweh-El; (2) the interplay of these texts with the passages they quote or allude to in the Hebrew Bible interchange Yahweh and this other אלוהים figure; (3) this divine being had some sort of priestly role; (4) this divine being also serves as the herald of good news, mediating divine favor as God wishes; and (5) this divine being is a warrior who carries out the military decrees of God.

---

[746] Mullen, *The Divine Council,* 129.
[747] K.W. Niebuhr, "4Q521, 2 II – Ein Eschatologischer Psalm," *The Qumran Chronicle* 5 (1995): 93-96.
[748] John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 236.

The parallels between this figure, the divine heavenly Melchizedek, and the pre-exilic divine vice-regent of the council, the מלאך יהוה, the captain of Yahweh's host, are apparent. Melchizedek is called אלוהים, as is the case with the מלאך יהוה, by virtue of the Name being in him (Exod 23:20-23; see also Hos 12:3-4; Gen 48:15-16). Melchizedek performs the priestly role of atonement in relation to release of captives; the מלאך יהוה has power to withhold forgiveness of sins and leads Israel to the Promised Land (Exod 23:20-23). This parallel is bolstered by the fact that scholars have discerned a connection between the atoning release of the captives in 11QMelchizedek and the deliverance of the slaves from Egypt.[749] As J. Collins notes:

> The liberation envisaged [in 11QMelch] is the same as that envisaged in Isaiah 42: the liberation of captives. . . . The reference is to the return of the exiles from Babylon and the restoration of the community in Judah. This is quite clear in context; e.g., Isa 60:4 says that "your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses arms." Isa 61:4 speaks of rebuilding ancient ruins. The release of the Jewish exiles from captivity is compared to the liberation of slaves. One of the recurring motifs in Deutero-Isaiah is that of the Lord as גאל, the kinsman who redeems his people. In the background, of course, is the paradigm of the release of the people of Israel from slavery in the Exodus. The release from Babylon is conceived as a re-enactment of the Exodus. The דרור is ultimately granted by God.[750]

Melchizedek as the herald of good news is paralleled by several instances where the מלאך יהוה performs the same function, announcing blessing and deliverance (Gen 16; Exod 3; Judg 6, 13). Finally, Melchizedek as military commander and dispenser of judgment calls to mind this familiar role of the מלאך יהוה (Josh 5:14; 2 Kgs 19:35; 1 Chr 21:15ff.; Isa 37:36).

It is precisely the military role of Melchizedek in 11QMelchizedek that has assured many scholars that the divine Melchizedek should be equated with the angel Michael. Other scholars contend that additional support for this equation has been found in line 12 of 4Q521, where the herald brings resurrection, an idea that is associated with Michael in the last days in Dan 12:1-3, albeit the association cannot be determined. These apparent congruencies notwithstanding, such an identification is overstated, and perhaps inaccurate. It is the position of this study that the arguments used for identifying Melchizedek with the archangel Michael can be

---

[749] C. Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Second Isaiah*, 66-94.
[750] John J. Collins, "A Herald of Good Tidings," 228-229.

used with equal force in defending the possibility that the Qumran scribes had another “angel” in mind—the מלאך יהוה in his role as a deity level vice-regent under Yahweh.

It should first be noted that Melchizedek may have been identified as an angel at Qumran. Several decades ago, F. du Toit Laubscher proposed a coherent reconstruction of the missing lacuna in 11QMelchizedek 13b that proposed this possibility.[751] Noting the eschatological nature of 11QMelchizedek, its commonalities with 1QM (most notably the dualistic holy war and identical phrases describing such), and the syntax of both scrolls, du Toit Laubscher reconstructed the lacuna of 13b using 4QCatena A, frags. 12-13, cols. 1,7. Both fragments are nearly identical and speak of the deliverance of the children of Light from the power of Belial. If du Toit Laubscher is correct in his case that the two texts are so close as to merit the reconstruction, where 11QMelchizedek has Melchizedek helping the children of Light against Belial, 4QCatena A has the phrase “his [God’s] angel of truth,” which would seem a strong parallel to “the angel of truth” in 1QS 3:24-25. This would mean that the resulting parallel has Melchizedek as God’s angel of truth.

But is God’s angel of truth Michael? It must be pointed out that no text at Qumran ever specifically equates the two figures.[752] The primary means of equating Melchizedek and Michael via the Qumran material has been based on several assumptions: (1) that the “Prince of Princes” and “Prince of the Host” of the book of Daniel refer to Michael; (2) that these terms from Daniel speak of the same being the Dead Sea Scrolls describe as the “Prince of Light” and the “Angel of Truth”; and (3) that these Qumran titles describe one being. I have already detailed in Chapter Six that the first assumption lacks coherence, since Daniel’s “Prince of Princes” and “Prince of the Host” is a being of superior status to Michael, who, though “great” is merely one of a larger number of chief princes. That the Qumran community apparently had the same view emerges from an examination of several passages in the scrolls.

It is well known that the “Prince of Light(s)” of 1QM 13:10-11 and 1QS 3:20 is at the head of the “dominion of light” to which all the “spirits of truth” and “sons of righteousness” belong. The chief adversary

---

[751] F. du Toit Laubscher, “God’s Angel of Truth and Melchizedek: A Note on 11QMelch 13b,” *JSJ* 3 (1972): 46-51. It should be noted that his reconstruction takes great care to match the grammar and syntactical flow of 11QMelchizedek 13.
[752] Bampfylde, “The Prince of the Host,” 130-131.

to this Prince is Belial, who rules the "dominion of darkness."[753] Several interesting descriptions of this Prince are provided in the sectarian scrolls that, in my opinion, provide a strong argument that this Prince is to be identified with the "Prince of Princes" and "Prince of the Host" of Daniel, who in turn should be identified with the מלאך יהוה, not Michael. First, 1QM 13:10-11 tells the reader that this Prince of Light was appointed "from of old" to assist the sons of righteousness. Second, CD 5:17-19 identifies this Prince as the One who helped Moses and Aaron lead Israel out of Egypt. This is a clear reference to the role of the מלאך יהוה in the Hebrew Bible (cf. Exod 23:20-23; Judg 2:1ff.), and on no occasion is the מלאך יהוה identified as Michael. There is no evidence in the Hebrew Bible that Michael is that being in whom the Name of Yahweh dwells. Third, the Prince of Light has the task of supporting the sons of light in the final eschatological battle, where he leads the angelic host against the forces of darkness (1QM 12:6ff.; 13:10-11). He is thus the heavenly leader (or Prince) of God's host. This fits quite well with the titles שַׂר־הַצָּבָא and שַׂר־צְבָא־יהוה of Dan 8:11 and Josh 5:14, as well as the conflict with the divine princes who rule nations in Daniel 10-11.

There is one passage in the War Scroll (1QM) to which scholars invariably appeal when arguing for a Michael-Melchizedek equation. In his critical edition of this important scroll, Y. Yadin contended that 1QM 17:5-8 identified Michael as the Prince of Light:

> 5 . . . Today is His [God's] appointed time to subdue and to humble the prince of the dominion 6 of wickedness. He will send eternal assistance to the lot to be redeemed by Him through the might of an angel (בגבורת מלאך): He hath magnified (האדיר) the authority of Michael (למשרת מיכאל) through eternal light 7 to light up in joy the house of Israel, peace and blessing for the lot of God, so as to raise amongst the angels (באלים) the authority of Michael (משרת מיכאל) and the dominion of 8 Israel (וממשלת ישראל) amongst all flesh.[754]

Michael is specifically named in this passage, but the title "Prince of Light" does not appear. Yadin's argument for their equation, and that of the vast majority of scholars who have followed him, is based on the translation of a few key phrases and the correlation of the passage's contents with other passages in the War

[753] Ibid., 131.
[754] The translation is Yadin's and is taken from Y. Yadin, *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness* (trans. Batya and Chaim Rabin; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), 340.

Scroll that describe the demise of the prince of darkness. Several observations are appropriate in regard to Yadin's translation and its implications.

Some scholars prefer the rendering "Angel of Might"[755] or "majestic angel"[756] to "the might of an angel" in line 6. These alternatives imply a distinction between this being and Michael, but have no grammatical superiority over Yadin's rendering. The primary point of contention is למשרת מיכאל of line 6. Yadin's translation of line 6 takes the ל of למשרת מיכאל as signifying the object of the verb האדיר, which has the effect of reading בגבורת מלאך as belonging to the prior clause. If one considers בגבורת מלאך as adverbially tied to האדיר, the result is that the ל of למשרת מיכאל describes Michael receiving help from the angel of might or "Mighty Angel," making them separate entities ("by the angel of might He magnified the dominion of Michael"). The result is that "Michael receives eternal help, i.e., heavenly assistance, from the Angel of Might."[757] This possibility, I would argue, is quite consistent with the book of Daniel, where a being who outranks Michael (by implication, the Prince of the Host) receives help from Michael.

One could argue (and most scholars have) that both Daniel and 1QM 17:5-8 merely describe Michael's princeship as being exalted above the other gods (באלים; cf. 1QM 17:7), the geographical princes of the council—an idea that is clearly related to the pre-exilic council worldview—and so Michael is indeed the Prince of the Host and Prince of Princes in Daniel, as well as the Prince of Light and Melchizedek at Qumran. A case could be made for this approach in the Qumran material, but it is incoherent in Daniel, for the Prince of the host / Prince of princes is apparently distinct from Michael.[758] It cannot be argued that Michael is made the lead prince among the beings of his own class in Daniel, for Michael assists the divine being who earlier had the authority to command Gabriel, another member of the princely class to which Michael belongs. I propose that projecting Yadin's view back into Daniel creates problems between the Qumran sectarian view and that canonical book, which was held in such esteem by the sect. Rather, we should see 1QM 17:5-7 in light of the divine hierarchy of Daniel.

---

755 Bampfylde, "The Prince of the Host," 132.
756 Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, vol. 1: 1Q1-4Q273* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 141.
757 Ibid., 132-133.

This suggestion has two benefits. First, it helps bring the references to resurrection in Dan 12:1-3 and 4Q521 closer together in a way that does not create contradiction with 1QM 17:5-7 or 11QMelchizedek. Seeing the "Angel of Might" as a being higher than Michael who takes action to elevate him and Israel over the other geographical god-princes and their respective nations completes the concatenated chain of mutually identified vice-regent figures in the Qumran texts: the divine Melchizedek, the Prince of Lights, and the מלאך יהוה. Yahweh's vice-regent is the one who exalts Michael at the time of the end, and it is he, according to 4Q521, who brings resurrection. Dan 12:1-3 merely says that individuals are resurrected in connection with Michael's rise; it does not suggest Michael is responsible. In like manner, Michael and the vice-regent are dissociated in that Michael is never called an אלוהים, he is not a herald, and is not said to be anointed. Positing a higher being over Michael yet under Yahweh resolves these longstanding angelological problems in Second Temple religion.

Second, arguing that these texts describe a divine being of greater rank than Michael and that this figure is the vice-regent of Yahweh's council makes the Qumran sect's identification of Melchizedek as אלוהים understandable. The use of Psalm 82 in 11QMelchizedek demonstrates that the Qumran sect's religious worldview was in concert with that of Deut 32:8-9 and the pre-exilic council. Melchizedek assumes the אלוהים role of Ps 82:1 and is victorious over the corrupt gods of Belial (lines 10-12). He is assisted by the "gods (אלי) of righteousness" in this feat (line 14).[759] Moreover, the elevation of Michael, Israel's prince, "over the gods" (באלים) in 1QM 17:7 again indicates the pre-exilic perspective of cosmic geography. The Qumran sect's expectations for the vice-regent of council would have aligned with Baal's roles of warrior and dynastic intercessor or guarantor.[760] Interpreting Psalm 82 eschatologically, however, required that the vice-regent fulfill the priestly atoning function of the anointed herald of Isaiah 61 (cf. the midrashic use of Lev 25). The warrior-

---

[758] See the earlier discussion in Chapter Six.

[759] Scholars of 11QMelchizedek agree that the phrase in line 14 is to be reconstructed אלי [הצדק] from Isa 61:3. The MT reads אילי הצדק, and this was interpreted by the sect as the full spelling of אלי. Newsom points out that several sectarian texts utilize the full spelling when divine beings are obviously in view, and so the full spelling of Isa 61:3 would not have dissuaded the Qumran author from seeing divine beings in Isa 61:3. She also speculates that the exegesis here may be the product of popular etymology, and points out that several manuscripts of MT have the בני אילים in Pss 29:1 and 89:7 (see Newsom, *The Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 23).

[760] Mullen, *The Divine Council*, 249-252. Recall that this role of Baal was referenced with respect to the "cloud witness / guarantor" in Psalm 89.

priest, acting on behalf of Yahweh, was also the herald of the divine council implied in Isaiah 40 and 52. The choice of Melchizedek is quite understandable in view of his description as a king-priest (Gen 14, Psalm 110), particularly since Michael could not meet all the criteria of the Qumran perspective.

The above vice regency expectations only partially answer the question of why the Qumran sect inserted Melchizedek into the divine council scene of Psalm 82. One speculation as to the exegesis or midrashic rationale for this belief is that Melchizedek was considered the divine earthly vice-regent of the Jebusite cult of Elyon inherited by David's conquest of Shalem, old Jerusalem,[761] and thus a prototype for the necessary god-priest-warrior king of Qumran apocalyptic.[762] Another scholarly perspective is that the Canaanite context for the Melchizedek account of Genesis 14 requires that scholars look to West Semitic religion for an answer. J. Davila argues that Melchizedek was likely viewed as an ancestral king, and thus, in Canaanite belief, he was "a divinized royal ancestor who . . . would have been an underworld deity . . . absorbed into the Davidic royal cult [in] the Jerusalem temple."[763] Hence there would have been a longstanding tradition that Melchizedek was divine, and as the progenitor of the original Jerusalem priesthood, he would be the primary Davidide servant anointed to fulfill the eschatological prophecies of Second Isaiah. Still another approach suggests that the divine Melchizedek is patterned after Ugaritic king Keret, called a "son of El" and thus divine.[764] Keret also functioned as a priest, making the connection to Melchizedek complete.[765] An Ugaritic provenance for Psalm 110 would be a necessity in this explanation, and its words would rightly be directed to Melchizedek and his descendants, positions that scholars have attempted to validate.[766]

All of these views make important points, but the most workable answer may be that Melchizedek's exalted position is somehow connected with hints of the personification of the Canaanite god *Ṣedeq* in the sectarian literature of Qumran. 1QM 17:5-8 illustrates such a personification, and in the context of the divine council no less:

---

[761] See Ps 76:3; J. A. Emerton, "The Site of Salem," in *Studies in the Pentateuch* (ed. J.A. Emerton; VTSup 41; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990), 45-71.
[762] John Day, "The Canaanite Inheritance of the Israelite Monarchy," 72-90.
[763] James R. Davila, "Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God," 224-229.
[764] *KTU* 1.16.I:10-25. See M. Delcor, "Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JSJ* 2:2 (1971): 122.
[765] Delcor, "Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts," 121-122.
[766] H. G. Jefferson, "Is Psalm 110 Canaanite?" *JBL* 73 (1954): 152-156; D. Flusser, *The Crucible of Christianity: Judaism, Hellenism, and the Historic Background of the Christian Faith* (New York, 1969), 229-230.

5 . . . Today is His [God's] appointed time to subdue and to humble the prince of the dominion 6 of wickedness. He will send eternal assistance to the lot to be redeemed by Him through the Angel of Might: He has magnified the authority of Michael through eternal light 7 to light up in joy the house of Israel, peace and blessing for the lot of God, so as to raise amongst the gods the authority of Michael and the dominion of 8 Israel among all flesh. Righteousness (צדק) will rejoice in the heights (במרומים) and all the sons of his truth will have enjoyment in everlasting knowledge . . .

In the Hebrew Bible צדק is sometimes personified, at times as a member of Yahweh's divine council, a phenomenon judged to reflect pre-Israelite (Jebusite) religion.[767] In West Semitic religion, the Phoenicians numbered Misor and Sydyk among their gods, which correspond to *mîšôr* ("justice") and *ṣedeq* ("righteousness") in the Hebrew Bible, and *Kittu* in the Babylonian pantheon, who is often invoked with *Misharu*.[768] Both of these Babylonian deities are described as being seated before Shamash or the minister of Shamash's right hand.[769] Melchizedek, whose name means either "my king is righteous" or, more likely, "my king is *Ṣedeq*," is said to be the king of Salem/Shalem and priest of אל עליון. This is usually understood to mean that Melchizedek was a priest of Canaanite El, but others have argued that Melchizedek was priest of the god ***Ṣedeq*.**[770] There is in fact evidence to suggest that *Ṣedeq* may perhaps be identified with the gods Shalem and El. For example, there are two alphabetic names from Ugarit, *ʾilṣdq* and *ṣdqʾil*, which may mean "El / my god is *Ṣedeq*," though "El / my god is righteous" is also possible.[771] There is also the Ugaritic personal name, *ṣdqšlm*, which likely means "*Ṣedeq* is Shalem," but may also be rendered, "Shalem is righteous."

The ambiguity of these names notwithstanding, Shalem certainly has connections to a solar cult, and aspects of the god *Ṣedeq* were certainly absorbed into Yahwism.[772] A pre-Israelite Jebusite solar cult makes sense of a number of verses in the Hebrew Bible, such as descriptions of Jerusalem as "the city of Righteousness" (Isa 1:21, 26) and "the pasture of Righteousness" (Jer 31:23). Followers of Yahweh are called "the oaks of Righteousness, the planting of Yahweh," where the parallelism transparently equates Yahweh and *Ṣedeq*. In Ps 17:1 *Ṣedeq* is part of a compound name of Yahweh ("Yahweh-*Ṣedeq*"). The solar flavor of *Ṣedeq*

---

[767] B. Batto, "Zedeq," *DDD,* 930.
[768] Ibid.
[769] Ibid.
[770] H.H. Rowley, "Zadok and Nehushtan," *JBL* 58 (1939): 130.
[771] Ibid., 931. See also M. Pope, *El in the Ugaritic Texts*, 22.
[772] Roy A. Rosenberg, "The God Ṣedeq," *HUCA* 36 (1965): 161-177. The references that follow were drawn from Batto and

worship is hinted at in Mal 3:19-20, where "the intense sun will consume the wicked like stubble, while for those who revere God, the 'sun of Righteousness' [*Ṣedeqah*] shall rise with healing in its wings."[773]

Of special significance for this chapter are eschatological references that appear to point to a personified *Ṣedeq* in the Hebrew Bible. In Jer 33:16 Jerusalem will be known in the eschaton as "Yahweh is our Righteousness." The anointed king is expected to "judge the world with Righteousness and [to] judge the peoples with Justice" (Ps 9:9; 98:9). He will "judge the weak with Righteousness [and] defend the poor of the earth with Justice" (Ps 45:7-8). These passages and these dual qualities of Yahweh recall the gods *mîšôr* ("justice") and *ṣedeq* ("righteousness"), as well as the anointed one of 11Qmelchizedek, who dispenses judgment upon the gods of Psalm 82 accompanied by the אלי הצדק.

J. Baumgarten has taken note of such references and investigated the personification of *Ṣedeq* in Jewish apocalyptic literature, especially at Qumran.[774] Aside from the immediate connections to 11QMelchizedek and Melchizedek's exalted stature among the gods of the council, Baumgarten notes that in the *Shabbat Shirot*

> . . . several categories of angels are associated with *Ṣedeq*: *malʾakê ṣedeq*, *ruḥot ṣedeq*, and *noʿadê ṣedeq*. Like the *ʾelê ṣedeq* these presumably comprise the heavenly counterpart of the *ʾanšê goral malki ṣedeq*, the men of Melchizedek's lot, mentioned in 11QMelch. The latter may in turn be identified with the adherents of the sect called Sons of *Ṣedeq*.[775]

After noting the relationship of *Ṣedeq* to solar and astral religion, particularly references in Isa 61:10 (cf. 11QMelchizedek's use of Isaiah 61) and Isa 62:1, where *Ṣedeq* is, respectively, the garment of the divine warrior and a personified divine being of Jerusalem who goes forth like the morning star, Baumgarten concludes that the deification of Melchizedek reflects the Qumran belief that he was not only a celestial priest but the embodiment of *Ṣedeq* himself. He also suggests that the anointed one of 11QMelchizedek was connected with the Son of Man of Daniel 7 who receives eternal dominion at the apocalypse, since the seventy weeks of Dan 9:24 determined to atone for iniquity and bring in eternal Righteousness (*Ṣedeq ʿolamîm*) "is quite similar to the chronology of 11QMelch where the atoning judgment of Melchizedek is to take place in the tenth jubilee."[776] If

---

Rosenberg.
773 Batto, "Zedeq," 932.
774 J. M. Baumgarten, "The Heavenly Tribunal and the Personification of *Ṣedeq* in Jewish Apocalyptic," in *ANRW* II, Principat 19.1 (ed. Wolfgang Haase; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1979), 219-239.
775 Ibid., 223.
776 Ibid.

Baumgraten’s suggestions are correct, this would bring all the descriptions and elements of the council vice-regent in Qumran texts and the Hebrew Bible together.

7.5 *Summation*

This overview of the sectarian material from Qumran has produced evidence that the sect’s religious worldview contained a number of elements consistent with pre-exilic Israelite religion’s divine council. The sectarian material is rife with references to plural אלוהים / אלים, explicit divine council and motifs, and descriptions of an exalted member of the divine council who acts as the specific agent of Yahweh in the manner of the pre-exilic council’s vice-regent. Such a worldview provides a Jewish backdrop—tied to the Hebrew Bible—for the notion of “two powers in heaven” that would emerge during the Second Temple period. As the final chapter of this study demonstrates, the Qumran sect’s perspective was just one of many offered to explain the language of divine plurality and deified heavenly mediators.

Chapter Eight

The Divine Council in Non-Sectarian Literature from Qumran and Other Non-Canonical Second Temple Period Literature

This chapter concentrates on the body of non-canonical pre-Christian Jewish literature that can be dated with reasonable certainty to the close of Judaism's Second Temple Period, or 70 C.E.[777] It therefore focuses on the non-sectarian material from Qumran, the LXX,[778] the Apocrypha, and the Pseudepigrapha that can be dated prior to the late first century C.E. The goal is to discern whether this literature evinces the presence of a divine council in a manner consistent with the pre-exilic terms, motifs, and paradigm detailed in the preceding chapters.

To that end, this chapter does not critique previous general treatments of Second Temple Period angelology,[779] *merkabah* mysticism,[780] or heavenly ascensions,[781] nor will it delve into issues of tradition history, redaction, and midrashic technique of the literature at hand.[782] These topics have been dealt with at

---

[777] See Chapter One for an explanation of these parameters and the exclusion of the New Testament.

[778] Space prevents a full treatment of the LXX, and so comments on that material will be limited. LXX readings are those found in the respective volumes of the Göttingen LXX (Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1979]).

[779] See Harold B. Kuhn, "The Angelology of the Non-Canonical Jewish Apocalypses," *JBL* 67:3 (1948): 217-232; Philip S. Alexander, "The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter Flint and James C. Vanderkam; vol. 2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 331-353; Robert Haywood, "Heaven and Earth in Parallel: The Key Role of Angels in Ancient Judaism," in *Christ* (London: SPCK, 1996), 57-74; Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*.

[780] Philip S. Alexander, "Comparing Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Essay in Method," *JJS* 35 (Spr 1984): 1-18; James R. Davila, "The Dead Sea scrolls and Merkavah Mysticism," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 249-264; Ithamar Gruenwald, "Reflections on the Nature and Origins of Jewish Mysticism," in *Gershom Scholem's Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism 50 Years After* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993), 25-57.

[781] Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses," in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys* (ed. John J. Collins and Michael Fishbane; Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995), 59-92; Arie Zwiep, "Assumptus est in Caelum: Rapture and Heavenly Exaltation in Early Judaism and Luke-Acts," in *Auferstehung* (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001), 323-349; David Halperin, "Ascension or Invasion: Implications of the Heavenly Journey in Ancient Judaism," *Religion* 18 (1988): 47-67; Alan F. Segal, "Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and Their Environment," *Vorkonstantinisches Christentum* (Principat 23:2; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), 1333-1394; James H. Charlesworth, "The Portrayal of the Righteous as an Angel," in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms* (ed. John J. Collins and George W.E. Nickelsburg; SBLSCS 12; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1980), 135-151.

[782] See for example, Michael E. Stone, ed., *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984); James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985); George Nickelsburg, "The Books of Enoch at Qumran: What We Know and What We Need to Think About," in *Antikes Judentum und Fruhes Christentum: Festschrift fur Hartmut Stegemann zum 65. Geburstag* (BZNW 97; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 99-113; Peter Flint, "'Apocrypha,' Other Previously-Known Writings, and 'Pseudepigrapha' in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter Flint and James C. Vanderkam; vol. 2; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 24-66; James C. Vanderkam, "The Angel Story in the Book of Jubilees," in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the International*

length by many scholars, and all such studies have presupposed the loss of the pre-exilic divine council second tier or the equation of divine second tier beings with the lower angels.

8.1 *Overview of the Primary Issues*

In general terms, Second Temple Jewish literature reveals several interesting phenomena related to the discussion at hand. First, there is divergence with respect to how references in the Hebrew Bible to אלים, אלהים, and בני (ה)אלהים / אלים are handled by Second Temple authors and translators. Some are quite literal (e.g., υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, θεοι, συναγωγῇ θεῶν); others tend to blur the council tiers by referring to every inhabitant of heaven as ἄγγελος. Other texts, such as 1 Enoch and Jubilees in their re-telling of Gen 6:1-4, frequently substitute "Watchers" (עירין or ἐγρηγοροι) for בני (ה)אלהים. Second, there are several texts that base the existence and activity of the heavenly hierarchy on Deuteronomy 32 and Daniel 10, where the nations of the earth were distributed among the sons of God, the ruling princes. Third, and perhaps most interesting, as the number of explicit references to the בני (ה)אלהים / אלים decrease (relative to the sectarian Qumran texts, at least), the fascination with divine vice-regency increases. As J. Baumgarten observed, "When one compares the earlier biblical allusions to the presidency of the heavenly court with those found in apocalyptic literature, one is immediately struck by the emergence of surrogate figures."[783] Speculation on the identity of Yahweh's divine vice regent is the most prominent feature of the pre-exilic divine council in Second Temple texts, which is significant with respect to this study's attempt to bridge the gap between Israelite religion and the two powers heresy of late antiquity.

Second Temple literature conveys an inconsistent angelology, which is why scholars have found it difficult to systematize. On the one hand, there are passages that seem to indicate that practically every designation of a member of the heavenly host overlaps with all the others. That is, terms like "angel," "archangel," "Watcher," "archon," and "power" are used interchangeably. On the other hand, there are texts where members of these categories are spoken of in exalted terms or placed above other classes (e.g., "sons of

---

Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12-14 January 1997 (ed. Esther G. Chazon and Michael Stone, with the collaboration of Avital Pinnick; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 151-170; Gabriele Boccaccini, "Qumran and the Enoch Groups," in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran* (ed. J.H. Charlesworth; N. Richland Hills, Texas: BIBAL Press, 2000), 63-92.

God"), evincing the kind of divine plurality one would expect in much earlier texts and the pre-exilic stage of Israelite religion. In other words, certain members of the heavenly host are said to be above angels or archangels yet below the God of Israel, or this status is implied by virtue of terms and status attributed to these beings in contemporary Gentile literature and mythology. To further complicate the issue, there are also clear statements of monotheism—or at least the "species uniqueness" of the God of Israel—in Second Temple Period texts.[784]

This final chapter puts forth three proposals that, if embraced, appear to resolve the muddle of Second Temple angelology. If one interprets the angelic terminology through the grid of a divine council worldview, the overlaps and contradictions largely disappear. The qualification "largely" is necessary because it cannot be said that Second Temple Judaism is monolithic. I would certainly argue that the views put forth here would be embraced by Jewish writers and thinkers of the period, but it would be an overstatement of the argument to contend that all Jews of the day would agree with my understanding of their terms and my proposed resolutions.

The first proposal is that the term "angel" in Second Temple texts (regardless of the language) became a generic designation for *any* member of the heavenly host during that period and was not restricted to members of the bottom tier of the pre-exilic council. That is, "angel" becomes a purely functional term designating the service of the high God, not a term that denotes council status or "ontological" classification.

M. Barker and others have argued that one of the reasons for the proliferation of angelic titles during this period is the expression of God's attributes.[785] We have seen in earlier chapters that the personification of God's attributes in pre-exilic literature (and even the Qumran sectarian material) was an indication of divine plurality. Some would suggest that the multiplication of angelic titles was an effort to disown such personification as if to undermine divine plurality. However, this only works as an explanation if one takes the word "angel" as subsuming the second tier deity-class language. I suggest that the persistence of such language

---

[783] Baumgarten, "The Heavenly Tribunal," 220.
[784] This chapter will focus on evidence of divine plurality, not monotheistic assertions. The claim of this study is not that Second Temple Judaism was monolatrous as a whole, only that for some Jews of the period exclusivistic monotheism would not reflect their beliefs. Nevertheless, even the clearest assertions of monotheism in this period could conceivably be construed as monolatry. For example, *Sibylline Oracle* Fragments One through Three confess that "God is alone, unique, and supreme" (3:4) since he is "self-generated [and] unbegotten" (1:16). Yet in the same text one reads that "if gods beget and yet remain immortal, there would have been more gods born than men" (2:1). 2 (Slavonic) Enoch (J) 2:2 affirms that while other gods are feckless, they exist but are temporary: "And do not turn away from the Lord, and worship vain gods, gods who did not create the heaven and the earth or any created thing; for they will perish, and so will those who worship them."

alongside the use of ἄγγελος and clear divine council motifs in Second Temple literature suggests that this was not the goal, and that this view does not account for such language.

My second proposal is that Second Temple references to a divine "heavenly man" *distinct from Michael* only make sense if the divine council vice regent paradigm is the conceptual backdrop. It is common in scholarly studies of Second Temple angelology to suppose that references to an exalted heavenly commander or intermediary speak of Michael. In some texts, this is clearly the case, but in others, a being higher than Michael is in view, a being who is not Yahweh but at times is difficult to distinguish from Yahweh. The situation thus mirrors the מלאך יהוה difficulty in the Hebrew Bible. Not surprisingly, on occasion the divine man is referred to using motifs associated with the מלאך יהוה.

Third, I propose that the category of archangel is synonymous with the categories "Watcher," "blessed ones" (Greek, μακάρες), "archon," "principality," and "dominion." All the beings designated in these ways exercise earthly geographical sovereignty, a function that coincides with the sons of God in Deut 32:8-9 and the gods / sons of the Most High in Psalm 82. In fact, in Second Temple theology, this sovereignty is extended to parts of the heavens, including stars and planets, an idea much in concert with pre-exilic Canaanite religion. "Watchers" is the term used throughout Second Temple literature for the sons of God in pre-exilic Hebrew literature. Scholarly discussion of the term creates a coherent case for the term being an Aramaic designation for a territorial deity, which makes the choice of the term to describe the beings set over the nations in pre-exilic Israelite religion quite sensible.

This third proposal amounts to the recognition that Second Temple Hellenistic and Aramaic vocabulary was utilized to describe the heavenly host at large and specific council members, *not to obscure the divine council's second tier*. All members of the heavenly host were Yahweh's servants, and so ἄγγελος was appropriate, yet insufficient to describe the old council bureaucracy. The point was not to create the impression that the pre-exilic bottom tier had replaced the second tier in the name of exclusivistic monotheism, but to further define the status and roles of those beings who were ἄγγελοι.

---

[785] Barker, *The Great Angel*, 70-95.

This chapter seeks to garner evidence for the endurance of the pre-exilic divine council and the coherence of these proposals. This evidence is presented in three areas: (1) The presence of multiple deity-class second tier beings, either in the form of a group or a deified figure above the other members of the heavenly host yet below God; (2) a religious worldview articulated along the lines of Deuteronomy 32 and Daniel 10, where the nations of the earth are ruled by divine heavenly princes; and (3) speculations in the literature about the identity of an exalted, deified vice-regent.[786]

8.2 The Divine Council and Second Tier Council Members

As noted above, the evidence for attitudes concerning plural divine beings within Second Temple Judaism is mixed. This section documents the evidence for the approval of the idea by surveying first the evidence for second tier beings as a group and with respect to a worldview reflective of Deut 4:19-20 and 32:8-9, then moving to references to individual deity-level beings in God's heavenly host.[787]

It is perhaps best to begin by commenting on a misperception about LXX angelology. It is common for LXX scholars to contend that the Hellenistic Jewish translators "demythologize" the references to plural gods and the sons of God in the Hebrew Bible, allegedly "in a process parallel to what happened in Hellenism with the mythology of Homer and Hesiod [where Hellenistic] critical philosophy puts the ancient Hellenistic pantheon to the test and the LXX shares this critical philosophy."[788] N. Fernandez Marcos' assertion is typical of this view:

> The simplification of the names of God is evident when we compare the range of expressions in Hebrew to denote the deity and the normal translation in the LXX using the common nouns κύριος and θεός. It is also evident in a tendency to remove any remnant of polytheism from the translation of God's names. The translators use circumlocutions to avoid the name of God, a tendency that would develop in late Judaism and in the rabbinic period. They translate *ʾelohim* as ἄγγελοι when it refers to the gods of the Canaanite pantheon and could cause difficulties if translated by θεοι.[789]

---

786 English translations of pseudepigraphic texts are taken from the respective translations in Charlesworth, ed., *OTP*, vols. 1-2, but occasionally made more literal to bring out the council vocabulary.

787 There are actually few instances where divine plurality is transparently rejected by virtue of the actions of an editor or writer. For example, in the book of *Jubilees*, the plural verb and possessive pronouns in the phrase "let us make humankind in our image and in our likeness" are completely omitted in the retelling of the creation of Adam and Eve. The same hint of plurality in Gen 11:5 is glossed by the author so the reader knows only angels are referred to by such language, not other gods. See Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, *Primeaval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 44, 352-353.

788 Natalio Fernandez Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: An Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible* (trans. Wilfred G. Watson; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000), 311.

789 Ibid.

It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate the claims above with respect to God's names. However, the claim that the LXX translators make a concerted effort to avoid any hint of polytheism by translating בני־האלהים as ἄγγελοι lest theological difficulties be raised by referring to other gods in the text is demonstrably untrue.[790] While it would certainly be the case that *some* LXX translators and *some* LXX manuscripts provide evidence of demythologization, there are a number of examples where the exact opposite is the case. The idea that the LXX reflects a concerted agenda to rid the text of divine plurality cannot be sustained.

Modern LXX scholarship has recorded a number of manuscripts with very literal renderings for all the main mythologically-charged references to the divine council in the Hebrew Bible. The Göttingen LXX establishes the following readings:

Gen 6:2 οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ[791]
Ps 29:1-2 (LXX, 28:1-2) υἱοὶ θεοῦ[792]
Ps 82:1 (LXX, 81:1) συναγωγῇ θεῶν, ἐν μέσῳ δὲ θεοὺς[793]
Ps 82:6 (LXX, 81:6) ἐγὼ εἶπα θεοί ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες
Ps 89:7 (LXX, 88:7) υἱοῖς θεοῦ

How the position articulated by Marcos can be defended in light of this manuscript evidence is difficult to discern. In addition to the above readings, it is the LXX that preserves the very clear reference to the sons of God in Deut 32:43 (πάντες υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ; cf. כל אלהים in 4QDeut^q).[794] The LXX departure from MT in Deut 32:8 is another well known example. Although most LXX witnesses read ἀγγελῶν θεοῦ here in place of the MT's בני ישׂראל, several also read υἱῶν θεοῦ, a literal translation of בני האלהים found in 4QDeut^j.[795] With respect to the divine council, in place of the four names of Isa 9:6, two of which are widely regard as

---

[790] Noting the propensity of the LXX translator of Job to use ἄγγελοι when translating בני־האלהים, J. Gammie comments, "I do not see how these renderings, in and of themselves, can very convincingly be held to constitute evidence of a monotheizing tendency in the Septuagint . . ." (John G. Gammie, "The Angelology and Demonology in the Septuagint of the Book of Job," *HUCA* 56 [1985]: 7). The Göttingen LXX lists no literal readings for בני־האלהים. 11QTgJob reads, "angels."

[791] The critical apparatus lists ἄγγελοι του θεου as a variant (*Göttingen Septuagint,* vol. I:108). Van Ruiten comments that "the oldest reading of LXX is probably 'sons of God' (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ)" (Jacques T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, "The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in *Jubilees* 5:1-19," in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees* [ed. Mathias Albani, Jorg Frey, and Armin Lange; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997], 66).

[792] Theodotion has υἱους ἰσχυρῶν (*Göttingen Septuagint,* vol. X: 120-121). Tate notes that other Greek witnesses read ὑἱους κριῶν, which either reflects a Vorlage of אילים or a decision to read אלים in that way (P. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* [WBC 19; Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1983], 242). Göttingen lists no other Greek variants.

[793] Aquila has ἐν συναγωγῇ ἰσχυρῶν (*Göttingen Septuagint,* vol. X: 223). Göttingen lists no other variants.

[794] Arie van Der Kooij, "The Ending of the Song of Moses: On the Pre-Masoretic Version of Deut 32:43," in *Studies in Deuteronomy in*

evincing divine status (אֵל גִּבּוֹר אֲבִיעַד; "mighty God, eternal father") the LXX translator's μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος ("angel of [the] great council") is startling. Although many scholars would render the phrase "angel of great counsel," I would suggest the alternative is to be preferred. The reference to the divine council (בְּסוֹד־קְדֹשִׁים) in Ps 89:8 (Hebrew; LXX = 88:8) is rendered ἐν βουλῇ ἁγίων ("in the council of the holy ones"). As J. Trigg noted in his study of the LXX of Isa 9:6, "βουλη can mean 'council' as well as 'counsel', so that, for readers of the LXX, μεγάλης βουλῆς ἄγγελος would suggest the angelic council of I Kings 22."[796]

To press the point concerning the LXX further, the translation and manuscript evidence of Ps 82:1 deserves additional attention. There is no manuscript inconsistency for the LXX reading ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν, and R.B. Salters, in his study of the Ps 82:1 and the LXX, notes that this rendering may be in fact reflect בעדת אלים rather than בעדת אל of MT.[797] He also points out that, even though Aquila's ἐν συναγωγῇ ἰσχυρῶν neutralizes the reference to other gods, his rendering does point to a plural, since he would likely have used θεοῦ had he been reading אל.[798] Aquila's translation of this phrase also points to the fact that he resists taking the phrase of 82:1a as being parallel to בקרב אלהים in 82:1b. Aquila apparently realized that observing the parallelism meant lending credence to the idea that there were other gods besides Yahweh. In Aquila's thinking, "God may have been presiding over the great assembly of Israel, or an assembly within Israel, possibly judges."[799] Aquila's predilection against a council of gods is made even more evident by the way he renders 82:1b: ἐν ἐγκατῳ κύριος κρινεῖ. He thus "differs from LXX by taking אלהים as the *subject* rather than the *object* of ישפט; that is to say he forces a parallelism on the verse which is not natural."[800] Significantly, LXX takes the opposite route. As Salters notes:

Honor of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday (ed. F. Garcia Martinez; VTSup 53; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), 95.
795 *Göttingen Septuagint,* vol. III, 2: 347.
796 Joseph W. Trigg, "The Angel of Great Counsel: Christ and the Angelic Hierarchy in Origen's Theology," *JTS* 42:1 (April 1991): 35-51.
797 R. B. Salters, "Psalm 82,1 and the Septuagint," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 226.
798 Ibid.,
799 Ibid., 227.
800 Ibid. Emphasis is the author's.

> At first sight the LXX appears to have faithfully followed the Hebrew text, though in the second half of the verse the translator seems to have had trouble with the clause בקרב אלהים ישפט. Instead of taking בקרב as a phrase in the construct state with אלהים, the latter is taken as an accusative: "in the midst, he judges gods"—not what one was expecting. Why? This is a deliberate "mistranslation" if you like. The LXX translators usually render בקרב either with a preposition, or with a prepositional phrase ἐν μεσῳ followed by a word in the genitive—there is an understandable exception in Psalms 36,2—but this translator is twisting the grammar to an unfamiliar degree. The form בְּקֶרֶב does not exist in the Old Testament in the absolute. . . . The intention, however ungrammatical, would seem to have been to make clear who is being judged. It is the אלהים that are being judged. This is a divine assembly, not a human one; and it must be noted that God is judging the אלהים, not human beings. The LXX translator, then, is eager to identify the אלהים of verse 1 with the אלהים of vv. 6ff.; and this may be because there existed at the time of translation a body of opinion which pressed for an interpretation of verse 1 as referring to a council of human beings.[801]

To summarize, the point being made with respect to LXX is that it cannot be said that all of the Hellenistic Jewish scribes who translated and transmitted the LXX found divine plurality and the divine council offensive. It seems that all that can be argued successfully from the data is that *some* Jewish translators were uneasy about the readings in the Hebrew text.

Moving on, there are a number of other references to divine plurality in Second Temple texts. In *Joseph and Aseneth* a "heavenly man" speaks to Aseneth,[802] gives her a honeycomb made in heaven, and informs her that "all the angels of God eat of it and all the chosen of God, and all the sons of the Most High." The latter phrase matches the LXX reading υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες in Ps 82:6 for בני־עליון. The word order and the phrase's juxtaposition with the other two phrases—one of which likely refers to human beings in paradise—appears to require the understanding that the "sons of the Most High" area a separate class of heavenly being and not angels.[803]

The early first century C.E. *Prayer of Joseph* also explicitly mentions the sons of God. Fragment A is the primary source for the belief that God's exalted divine vice regent was the patriarch Jacob, a subject discussed later in this chapter. For our purposes, Jacob has the authority to inform Uriel precisely what rank he [Uriel] held "among the sons of God (υἱοὺς θεοῦ)" (lines 6-7). Jacob goes on to explain to Uriel that now he, Jacob, was "the archangel of the power of the Lord" and "the chief captain among the sons of God

---

801 Ibid.

(υἱοὶς θεοῦ)." The reference designates the archangels as the sons of God, which is important with respect to the earlier book of 1 Enoch.

In *Pseudo-Phocylides*, mention is made on two occasions (75, 163) of "the blessed ones" (μακάρες). This term generally refers to the heavenly bodies designated as gods. The idea that the stars were animate beings is frequently found in Second Temple Jewish literature, and is a direct carryover from pre-exilic Israelite religion and the surrounding Babylonian and Canaanite polytheistic religions.[804] *1 En.* 21:6-10 describes the imprisoned Watchers as "stars." *1 En.* 72:1-3; 80:1 refers to angels as "leaders of the stars" and "leaders of the stars of heaven," while *2 En.* 4:1-2 uses the descriptive phrase "the elders, rulers of the stars" to speak of angels. The *Testament of Solomon*, dated by some scholars to the first century C.E., has demonic entities identifying themselves as "heavenly bodies, rulers (κοσμοκράτορες) of this world of darkness" (8:1, 4).[805] Elsewhere in *Pseudo-Phocylides* (104), the dead are referred to as gods, prompting van der Horst's comment that, "this looks rather pagan and has no exact Jewish parallels, though often the deceased were regarded as angels, and angels were often called gods."[806] The comment apparently reflects an unfamiliarity with the ascension / divinization motifs and deity-class language of the Qumran sectarian material. It is precisely because of these references that some have doubted the Jewish authorship of *Pseudo-Phocylides.*[807]

In her study of the language of astral religion and multiple heavens in Second Temple Jewish literature, A. Y. Collins argues that the archangels in this stage of Jewish theology, numbered either as four or seven, correspond to the seven heavens mentioned in Jewish apocalypses, which in turn derived from Babylonian beliefs about the seven planets.[808] The understanding that each planet was controlled or occupied by a god was quite familiar at the time.[809] The correspondence of certain classes of angels with the mutli-layered heavens was

---

[802] More will be said about the "heavenly man" momentarily.
[803] "Joseph and Aseneth," translated by C. Burchard (*OTP* 2:229).
[804] Lelli, "Stars," *DDD,* 813-814.
[805] See R. Feldmeier, "World Rulers," *DDD,* 908-909.
[806] "Pseudo-Phocylides," translated by P. W. van der Horst (*OTP* 2:570).
[807] Ibid.
[808] Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses," 83ff.
[809] Lelli, "Stars," *DDD,* 814.

troubling to the monotheism of certain Jews since these angelic beings were worshipped alongside the God of heaven.[810]

The issue of the divine status of archangels and the highest place in the heavens is related to the link between the archangels and throne chariot vision of Ezekiel 1, 10. Nickelsburg notes that the number of four archangels in 1 Enoch 9-10 was "doubtless inferred from the four living creatures (חיות) in the throne vision of Ezekiel 1-2. . . . The later literature makes an association with Ezekiel 1-2 explicit."[811] The number is expanded to seven in 1 Enoch 20-36, 81 "to provide a complement of angels who are associated with the places of Enoch's cosmic tour."[812] Although, as noted above, the seven archangels are associated with the cosmos, an association of the seven with God's throne—as in the case of the four—occurs in *1 En.* 87:2-40 and the book of Tobit (3:16-17; 12:11-15). The seven archangels became identified with the seven eyes of Yahweh, which in turn were linked to the seven lamps of the menorah (cf. 4:10).[813]

This association is significant with respect to divine plurality in Second Temple Judaism in that Philo, in a complex philosophical speculation, connects the menorah to the Logos and the archangels in a way that implies the plurality of either Yahweh or the Logos, or both. Philo says of the Logos, "I sustained the universe to rest firm and sure upon the mighty Logos who is my viceroy."[814] The Logos is "that power of his [God] by which he made and ordered all things."[815] Philo goes on to pluralize the Logos by referencing the Logos as the central stem of the menorah (which formerly represented Yahweh), dividing three lamps from three lamps.[816] Along with the Logos, God's "power," Philo says there are many powers, which are angels, which are in turn the Glory of God: "By Glory I understand the Powers that keep guard around Thee." Moses was told by God that seeing the face of God was disallowed, and that only God's back parts could be seen (Exod 33:23). Philo understands God's back parts as the angelic powers,[817] an interpretation attested in Targum Neofiti to Exod

[810] Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Worship and Monotheism in *The Ascension of Isaiah*," in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus* (ed. Carey Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis; JSJSup 63; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999), 70-89.
[811] Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 1-36, 81-108* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 207.
[812] Ibid.
[813] M. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 83.
[814] *Dreams* 1: 241; cf. *Agriculture*, 51.
[815] *Confusion*, 137.
[816] *Spec. Laws* 1: 45; *Heir*, 215.
[817] *Flight*, 165; *Names*, 9.

33:23: "I will make a troop of angels pass by who stand and minister before me and you will see the Word of the Glory of my Shekinah."[818] Two of the chief Powers—two archangels in Philo's thinking—were called "God" and "Lord," but he was careful to clarify that these were but two aspects of the One:

> The two primary Powers of the Existing One, namely that through which He wrought the world, the beneficent, which is called God, and that by which he rules and commands that which he made, that is the punitive, which bears the name of the Lord, are, as Moses tells us, separated by God himself standing above and in the midst of them. 'I will speak to thee', it says, 'above the mercy seat in the midst of the two Cherubim'. He means to show that the primal and highest powers of the Existent, the beneficent and the punitive, are equal, having him to divide them.[819]

Not only is God between the two primary Powers, but so is the Logos:

> While God is indeed One, his highest and chief Powers are two, even Goodness and Sovereignty . . . and in the midst between the two, there is a third which unites them, the Logos, for it is through the Logos that God is both ruler and good. Of these two powers, Sovereignty and Goodness, the cherubim are the symbols, as fiery sword is the symbol of the Logos.[820]

Philo therefore created the impression that there was plurality *in* God and that this plurality was made manifest in the archangels as extensions of deity. It is also noteworthy that the "fiery sword," a symbol which may recall the biblical שַׂר־צְבָא־יהוה, symbolizes the Logos.

The deity-level status of archangels is also implied by their designation as Watchers (עירין or ἐ̓γρηγοροι), who very clearly in Second Temple literature correspond to the sons of God of the Hebrew Bible, particularly with respect to the Gen 6:1-4 episode. Note the following examples, all of which reference the perpetrators of that event:[821]

> <u>*1 En.* 6:1-2</u>
>
> In those days, when the children of man had multiplied, it happened that there were born unto them handsome and beautiful daughters. And the angels, the sons of heaven (υἱοὶ οὐρανοῦ), saw them and desired them . . .
>
> <u>*1 En.* 14:1, 3</u>
>
> This is the book of the words of righteousness and the chastisement of the eternal Watchers (ἐγρήγοροι), in accordance with how the Holy and Great One has commanded in this vision. . . . Accordingly he has created me and given me the word of understanding so that I may reprimand the angels, the sons of heaven (ἄγγελοι υἱοὶ οὐρανοῦ).

---

[818] Barker, *The Great Angel*, 127.
[819] *Heir*, 166; cf. *QG* 1: 57; *Unchangeable*, 109.
[820] *Cherubim*, 27-28.
[821] The translations are from "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," translated by E. Isaac (*OTP* 1:15, 20, 23-24, 30, 49, 86).

1 En. 20:1; 21:1-6, 10

1 And these are the names of the holy angels who watch (ἒγρηγοροι) . .

1 And I came to an empty place. 2 And I saw (there) neither a heaven above nor an earth below, but a chaotic and terrible place. 3 And there I saw seven stars of the heaven bound together in it, like great mountains and burning with fire. 4 At that moment I said, "For what sin are they bound, and for what reason are they cast in here?" 5 Then one of the holy angels, Uriel, who was with me, leading them, spoke to me and said to me, "Enoch, for what reason are you asking and for what reason do you question and exhibit eagerness? 6 These are among the stars of heaven (ἀστέρες οὐρανοῦ), which have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and are bound in this place until the completion of ten million years." 10 . . . And he said unto me: "This place is the prison house of the angels (ἄγγελοι); they are detained here for ever."

1 En. 39:1

1 And it shall come to pass in those days that the children of the elect and the holy ones [will descend] from the heights of heaven (ἐκ τῶν ὑψιστῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ)[822] and their seed will become one with the children of the people.

1 En. 71:1-3

1 Thus it happened after this that my spirit passed out of sight and ascended into the heavens. And I saw the sons of the holy angels (υἱοὶ ἀγγελῶν) walking upon the flame of fire; their garments were white—and their overcoats—and the light of their faces was like snow. 2 Also I saw two rivers of fire, the light of which fire was shining like hyacinth. Then I fell on my face before the Lord of Spirits. 3 And the angel Michael, one of the archangels, seizing me by my right hand and lifting me up, led me out into all the secrets of mercy . . .

1 En. 106:4-6

4 And his father, Lamech, was afraid of him and fled, and went to Methuselah his father; 5 and he said to him, "I have begotten a strange son: he is not like an ordinary human being, but he looks like the sons of heaven (υἱοὶ οὐρανοῦ) to me; his form is different, and he is not like us. His eyes are like the rays of the sun, and his face glorious. 6 It does not seem to me that he is of me, but of angels (ἄγγελοι) . . .

It is clear from these passages that terms like "angels," "archangels," "Watchers," "holy ones," "highest ones," and "sons of heaven" overlap.[823] The majority of scholars contend that these phrases appear to be a substitutes for "sons of God" because "the Judaism of the Greek period found the latter objectionable."[824] This opinion lacks force, however, being weakened by the fact that Jewish writers and translators of the Hellenistic period, as witnessed in the Qumran sectarian texts and the LXX, were not averse to textual references to divine

---

[822] This reading is a partial restoration by Black (Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition With Commentary and Textual Notes* [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985], 196).
[823] See also Tob 12:15; *1 En.* 69:1-7 (the archangels are also referred to as angels).
[824] Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1: A Commentary* (Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1971), 84; Black, *The Book of Enoch*, 116.

plurality. In reality, there were varieties of Hellenistic Judaism, and statements that portray Second Temple Judaism enforcing an agenda against divine plurality do not account for the evidence to the contrary.[825]

With respect to the possibility that the plural sons of God survive in references to the watchers, Nickelsburg has observed that such references are often qualified with phrases such as "holy ones" and "the sons of heaven."[826] He has further detected a pattern in Second Temple Period usage. According to Nickelsburg:

> Nowhere do the Qumran fragments of 1 Enoch attest the Aram. מלאכא, even where the LXX and Ethiopic have ἄγγελος and malʾak . . . [W]ith the exception of 12:3, the LXX and Ethiopic reserve "watcher" as a designation for the rebel angels, with the qualifier "holy" being used only at 15:9. . . . With a few isolated exceptions (19:1,2; the doublet at 21:10; and 106:5-6, 12, where the counterparts in 1QapGen 2:1, 16 read "watchers, holy ones, watchers, sons of heaven") the LXX and Ethiopic never use 'angel' to designate the rebel heavenly beings. This pattern suggests that the Greek translator(s) adopted "watchers" as the designation for the rebels and thus distinguished them from the others, who were almost uniformly known as "angels". . . . It is possible, and perhaps likely, that the original Aramaic uniformly designated the heavenly ones as עירין ("watchers"), reserved עירין וקדישין ("watchers and holy ones") for the unfallen heavenly beings, and used עירין די שמיא ("watchers of heaven") as a neutral term that designated both the good and evil beings as entities of heavenly provenance or as those who belonged to God, who is referred to by the circumlocution, "heaven."[827]

If Nickelsburg's observations have merit, these distinctions imply that Watchers are to be distinguished from angels. The fact that the phrase "sons of God" and "holy ones" appear in parallelism in 1QH 11(3):22 and Wis. 5:5 may also suggest a distinction, at least in the minds of some. J. Collins agrees that they were indeed "conceived of as a distinct class."[828] There are several lines of evidence that lends plausibility to this idea, especially if, as proposed earlier, one considers the term "angel" to have become a catch-all term.

Scholars are generally agreed that "Watcher" (עיר, ἐγρηγόρος) was understood by ancient translators as "unsleeping."[829] For example, this understanding is evident in *1 En.* 39:12, 13; 40:2; 61:12; and 71:7 where the term is defined as "those who sleep not." The idea seems to have been that these beings "are on twenty-four

---

[825] On the variations of Second Temple Judaism, see Philip R. Davies, "Judaisms in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Case of the Messiah," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 219-232; Gabriele Boccaccini, "Multiple Judaisms: A New Understanding of the Context of Earliest Christianity," *BRev* 11 (Fall 1995), 38-41, 46; idem, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis*; John J. Collins, "Varieties of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods," *JR* 77:4 (Oct 1997): 605-611.

[826] Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 140. For "holy ones" see Dan 4:10, 14, 20 (Hebrew, 13, 17, 23); *1 En.* 22:6. For the latter "sons of heaven" and the related "Watchers of heaven," see *1 En.* 6:2; 12:4; 13:10; 14:3; 15:2. See also 1QapGen 2:1, 16.

[827] Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 140.

[828] John J. Collins, "Watcher," *DDD,* 894.

[829] Ibid. See also R. Murray, "Origin of Aramaic *ʿîr*," 304; John J. Collins, "Watcher," *DDD,* 893.

hour duty attending God—whether to praise God or to function as a kind of bodyguard in the throne room.[830] A second connotation of the term is evident in *1 En.* 20:1. This text identifies the Watchers as the archangels since 20:1 states, "These are the names of the holy angels who watch" and then proceeds to name the seven archangels who "supervise aspects of the universe."[831] Watcher and archangels are also equated in *1 En.* 40:1-2, where the four who guard the throne of God are referred to as "those who do not slumber."

The Watcher-archangel connection is secure in view of the texts above. That "Watchers" was the designation of choice for the fallen sons of God is also demonstrable from 1 Enoch, Jubilees, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, and a variety of non-sectarian texts from Qumran.[832] Another possible point of evidence for a correlation between this Second Temple classification and the second tier divine beings of the Hebrew Bible concerns the philology of עיר.

Charles considered the idea of the guardianship of the Watchers to extend to the nations, pointing to Deut 32:8-9, Psalm 82, and Isa 62:6 as precedent.[833] In an attempt to add philological weight to Watchers as territorial spirits, Dahood proposed that עיר derived from Ugaritic *ǵyr* ("to protect") and is reflected in the Hebrew verb עור ("to awaken, rouse up").[834] In this case, the conception would apparently be that the unsleeping Watcher is awake while others sleep, or the watchman's duty to awaken the sleeping city in times of danger, hence guardianship. Other derivations are possible. Ugaritic *ǵyr* can also mean "pit, depth,"[835] creating the possibility that the plural might be metaphorical for "those from the pit." Another possibility is Ugaritic *ǵr* ("mountain"),[836] in which case there may be an association to the divine beings from the divine mountain of the council.

[830] Nickelsburg, *1* Enoch, 140.
[831] Ibid. See also *1 En.* 82:10.
[832] See Prescott Williams, "The Watchers in the Twelve and at Qumran," in *Texts and Testaments: Critical Essays on the Bible and Early Church Fathers* (Trinity University Press, 1980), 71-92; James C. VanderKam, "The Angel Story in the Book of Jubilees," 151-170; van Ruiten, "The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in *Jubilees* 5:1-19," 59-75; J. P. Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968).
[833] R. H. Charles, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1929), 91. As noted in Chapter Five of this study, it cannot be conclusively established that the שׁמרים of Isa 62:6 are non-human.
[834] M. Dahood, *Psalms I* (*AB* 16; New York: Doubleday, 1966), 55; cf. J. Collins, "Watcher," *DDD,* 892.
[835] *DULAT* 1:328. See *HALOT* 2:802.
[836] Ibid., 1:324. See *HALOT* 2:802.

The above options are speculative, and scholars are skeptical that there are any secure instances where either Hebrew עיר or Ugaritic *ǵyr* are used to refer to territorial entities or guardians.[837] In agreement with Stamm, Murray contends that the strongest instances for the verb are the imperfect יָעִיר of the eagle in Deut 32:11 and of God in Job 8:6 ("If you were pure and upright, surely he [God] would awaken for you. . .").

As examples of noun usage, Murray postulated that there may have been "a noun (or participle) related to the verb * *ʿyr*, denoting a kind of guardian divinity which was honoured under Canaanite influence."[838] Most of Murray's suggestions for Hebrew ערים as a cryptic reference to the Watchers are quite forced,[839] but his notion may lend clarity for the puzzling verses of Isa 33:7-8:

7 הֵן אֶרְאֶלָּם צָעֲקוּ חֻצָה מַלְאֲכֵי שָׁלוֹם מַר יִבְכָּיוּן׃
8 נָשַׁמּוּ מְסִלּוֹת שָׁבַת עֹבֵר אֹרַח הֵפֵר בְּרִית מָאַס עָרִים
לֹא חָשַׁב אֱנוֹשׁ׃

The *JPS Tanakh* translates these two verses, "Hark, the Arielites cry aloud; Shalom's messengers weep bitterly. Highways are desolate, wayfarers have ceased. A covenant has been renounced, cities rejected, mortal man despised." There are several interesting items in this text. In another article Murray argues that Isaiah 33 "echoes a ritual for the control of hostile forces, both human and supernatural."[840] Citing the phrase מַלְאֲכֵי שָׁלוֹם and the enigmatic אֶרְאֶלָּם ("Arielites"), both of which Jewish tradition understood as angels, Murray contends the ערים of 33:8b is an obscured reference to the Watchers. It is interesting that the *Testament of Dan* mentions "a unique mediator, standing between God and mankind" who is called "the angel of peace," but there is no evidence that this is related to Isaiah 33.[841] The references to Lebanon, Bashan, and Carmel in 33:9 further contextualize the passage in favor of some sort of lament in the wake of, or in anticipation of, a supernatural conflict. These geographical names are associated with Mt. Hermon, where the

---

837 John J. Collins, "Watcher," *DDD,* 894.
838 Murray, "Origin of Aramaic *ʿîr*," 307-308.
839 For example, Murray suggested ערים (with or without suffix) could be translated "Watchers" in Isa 14:21; Mic 5:13; Jer 2:28; 11:13.
840 R. Murray, "Prophecy and Cult," in *Israel's Prophetic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Peter Ackroyd* (ed. R. Coggins, A. Phillips, and M. Knibb; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 200-216.
841 R. Feldmeier, "Mediator II," *DDD,* 559.

Watchers descended from heaven, and mark the place where the Watchers wept after being sentenced to eternal imprisonment.[842] The verse seems more coherent if refers to judgment: “Behold, the Arielites [angels] cry aloud, the angels of peace weep bitterly. Highways are desolate, Wayfarers have ceased, a covenant has been renounced, the Watchers rejected.”

Whereas Murray argues that these examples involve only a misunderstanding of a forgotten root source behind עיר, he adduces several examples where he believes an original Hebrew עירים or ערים (“Watcher”) has been deliberately changed by scribes to עורים (“blind”) as a “mocking substitute” to satirize these old guardian deities. For example, in 2 Sam 5: 6, 8 the עורים that the Jebusites thought would defend them and keep David out of the city, and which the text says David hated, were actually עירים / ערים, Watchers. As proof that this deliberate manipulation of the text was known to the ancients, Murray offers the LXX of Lam. 4:14, where the phrase נָעוּ עִוְרִים בַּחוּצוֹת (“they have wandered as blind men in the streets”) is inexplicably rendered ἐσαλεύθησαν ἐγρήγοροι αὐτῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐξόδοις (“her watchers / watchmen staggered in the streets”).

While some of these passages may suggest a correlation between an alternative Hebrew עיר and Aramaic עיר where both derive from Ugaritic *ǵyr*, the evidence is inconclusive. There are inherent obstacles to such a correspondence. Ugaritic has its own *ʿayin* and the word for *ʿyr* (“city”), hence there is no *a priori* reason to look for a root beginning with Ugaritic *ǵ*. While Ugaritic *ǵ* is usually phonetically congruent with Hebrew and Aramaic ע, Ugaritic *ǵ* may also atypically correspond to Proto-Semitic *ẓ*, Akkadian *ṣ*, and Aramaic *ṭ*.[843]

---

[842] G. del Olmo Lete, “Bashan,” *DDD,* 161-163; W. Rollig, “Lebanon,” *DDD,* 506-507.
[843] Daniel Sivan, *A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (HO 28; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997), 23-24; Josef Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik* (AOAT 273; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000), 125-126; Stanislav Segert, *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 35.

8.3 References to the Divine Council and the Worldview of Deuteronomy 4 and 32

The language of the divine council is also evident by virtue of specific descriptions of divine council scenes and references to multiple throne chariots reminiscent of the *Shabbat Shirot. 2 En.* [J] 22:1-6 records Enoch's vision of the God of Israel in his throne room:[844]

> 1 And on the tenth heaven, Aravoth, I saw the view of the face of the Lord, like iron made burning hot in a fire and brought out, and it emits sparks and is incandescent. Thus even I saw the face of the Lord. But the face of the Lord is not to be talked about, it is so very marvelous and supremely awesome and supremely frightening. 2 And who am I to give an account of the incomprehensible being of the Lord, and of his face, so extremely strange and indescribable? And how many are his commands, and his multiple voice, and the Lord's throne, supremely great and not made with hands, and the choir stalls all around him, the cherubim and seraphim armies, and their never-silent singing. 3 Who can give an account of his beautiful appearance, never changing and indescribable, and his great glory? 4 And I fell down flat and did obeisance to the Lord. 5 And the Lord, with his own mouth, said to me, "Be brave, Enoch! Don't be frightened! Stand up, and stand in front of my face forever." 6 And Michael, the Lord's *archistratig*, lifted me up and brought me in front of the face of the Lord.

Noting the divine court context of this vision, F. I. Andersen comments that:

> This act of the Lord in consulting the heavenly assembly is very significant. . . . The discussion in the divine assembly provides the starting point of many Old Testament oracles, and prophets participate in some way, if only in a vision. The scene in 2 En 22 retains quite a lot of this mythology. There is no real debate. The Lord makes a proposal and the angels concur.[845]

The *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* (Text A) records a divine council vision of the prophet in the fifth heaven. The prophet states, "I saw angels who were called lords (κυρίους), and the diadem was set upon them in the Holy Spirit, and the throne of each of them was sevenfold more brilliant that the light of the sun."[846] *1 En.* 47:3 has Enoch relating that "I saw the Chief of Days when he seated himself upon the throne of his glory, and the books of the living were opened before him; And all his host which is in heaven above and his council stood before him." *2 En.* 20:1 describes an array of "many-eyed thrones" in the seventh heaven, along with numerous archangels, dominions, and authorities. Since God himself is in the tenth heaven in 2 Enoch, these thrones are unmistakably for ruling council members. While the terms in this selection do not denote divine plurality, the wordings recall Dan 7:9 and Ezekiel 1.

---

[844] "J" is the longer Old Slavonic rescension (cf. "2 [Slavonic Apocalypse of] Enoch," translated by F. I. Andersen [*OTP* 1:98]).
[845] "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," translated by F. I. Andersen (*OTP* 1:138, note j).
[846] "Apocalypse of Zephaniah," translated by O. S. Wintermute (*OTP* 1:508).

The heavenly bureaucracy of the Second Temple period is very complex and well known to scholars. Second Temple Jewish texts speak of "angels of the Presence" (*Hel. Syn. Pr*. 4:11), "angels of sanctification" (*Jub.* 15:27), "archangels" (e.g., *1 En*. 20-22, 40:8-10); *L.A.E.* 25:3-4), "archons" (*T. Job* 49:2; *1 En.* 6:7-8; *2 En.* 20:1); "rulers of the stars" (*2 En.* 4:1-2), "satans" (*1 En.* 40:1-8), "powers" (*1 En.* 40:8-10; 65:6-7; 82:8-9), "principalities" (*1 En.* 61:10-11), and "dominions" (*1 En.* 61:10; *2 En.* 20:1).

While these terms are not precise as to a specific second tier of gods within the council, the pre-exilic council worldview behind the dense bureaucracy comes through clearly. The passage cited above from the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* refers to ruling council members in the tradition of the pre-exilic council of Israelite religion. These members exercise geographical authority and are elsewhere referred to by Greek ἄρχῶν, ἄρχοντες,[847] a term that the LXX uses to translate references to pagan deities (cf. Ezek 31:11). The term ἄρχοντες is specifically used in the LXX as a designation for the princes (שׂרים) of Dan 10:13, and seven times in Theodotian Daniel (10:12, 20-21; 12:1), where LXX has στρατηγός ("commander, magistrate").[848] In *1 En.* 6:7-8 ἄρχὴ and ἄρχῶν are used interchangeably as titles for supernatural forces, specifically twenty named watchers.[849] 2 Enoch (Text A) uses the term "dominions (κυριότης)" of angelic beings who exercise territorial rule.[850] 2 Enoch also employs the language of divine royalty for the same beings, describing the council rulers as "princes" (18:3).

Mention should also be made of seventy angelic shepherds of 1 Enoch 89-90, the Animal Apocalypse. While it is tempting to see these shepherds as a direct parallel to the sons of God of Deut 32:8-9 (cf. the seventy nations of the Table of Nations), Nickelsburg correctly notes that the source of the seventy shepherds in Enoch is more likely Ezekiel 34 and Zechariah 11. The seventy shepherds of 1 Enoch 89-90 are human, not angelic.[851] They are not over the Gentile nations, but over Israel, and the number seventy is associated with seventy time periods, not the number of the nations created by the division of the nations in Genesis 11 referenced in Deut 32:8-9.[852]

---

[847] D. E. Aune, "Archon," *DDD,* 82-85.
[848] Ibid., 84.
[849] D. E. Aune, "Archai," *DDD,* 77.
[850] P. W. van der Horst, "Dominion," *DDD,* 262.
[851] Patrick Tiller, *A Commentary on the Animal Apocalypse of 1 Enoch* (SBLEJL 4; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 51-54.
[852] Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 391.

Jub. 15:30b-32 provides the fullest description of the worldview of Deut 4:19-20; 32:8-9, and Daniel 10:

> 30 . . . But he chose Israel that they might be a people for himself. 31 And he sanctified them and gathered them from all of the sons of man because (there are) many nations and many people, and they all belong to him, but over all of them he caused spirits to rule so that they might lead them astray from following him. 32 But over Israel he did not cause any angel or spirit to rule because he alone is their ruler and he will protect them and he will seek for them at the hand of his angels and at the hand of his spirits and at the hand of all of his authorities so that he might guard them and bless them and they might be his and he might be theirs henceforth and forever.[853]

The passage is interesting on a number of levels. While the "sons of God" language of Deut 32:8-9 is absent, being replaced by the neutral "spirits," "angels," and "authorities," the point of Deut 4:19-20, that Yahweh has ordained that the other nations worship foreign gods, has been well preserved. The declaration that no angel or spirit rules over Israel appears to be a direct contradiction of Dan 10:21 and 12:1 and other pseudepigraphic material (*1 En.* 89-90) that follows Daniel. However, the author may be obliquely stating that God is greater than the angels he assigned to other nations, and ultimately superior to the angel of Israel.[854]

8.4 *Evidence for an Exalted Divine Vice Regent*

In *Joseph and Aseneth*, Aseneth's visitor, the "heavenly man" (14:4, et.al.) who is distinguished from the God of heaven by his titles "chief of the house of the Lord and commander of the whole host of the Most High" (14:7-8) is himself referred to as a god (θϵος) two times (17:9; 22:3). Several manuscripts of this text inform us that certain Jewish scribes were offended at this notion. In some manuscripts the scribe has added the definite article, apparently in an attempt to cast the figure as God himself and remove the reference to a second divine being, while other witnesses substitute "angel."[855] Interestingly, this being and others described in divine terms frequently have white hair and are of "old age yet like the youth of a handsome young man" (22:7), terms that may have been drawn from the deity figure the Ancient of Days in Dan 7:9-10.

This observation may also be significant for another reason. While a number of scholars propose that this heavenly man is Michael by virtue of the fact that Michael is called "commander in chief" (ἀρχιστράτηγος)

---

[853] "Jubilees," translated by O. S. Wintermute (*OTP* 2:87).
[854] Hannah, *Michael and Christ*, 31.
[855] "Joseph and Aseneth," (*OTP* 2:231, 239).

in other pseudepigraphic texts,[856] this text never identifies the heavenly man as Michael. Scholars assume that this title links Michael to the מלאך יהוה since the LXX translates שַׂר־צְבָא־יְהוָה in Josh 5:14 with ἀρχιστράτηγος δυνάμεως κυρίου, but the same title is also used of Raphael (*Gk.Apoc.Ezra* 1:4)[857] and Michael's military functions are not unique to him, being shared by other archangels.[858] It is certainly conceivable that the author of *Joseph and Aseneth* is drawing from descriptions of Michael in other texts of the day, but it is equally possible that the author's own theology saw an exalted figure above Michael. This is in fact a familiar problem with Second Temple literature and Michael. M. Mach notes that:

> It is generally difficult to point out the traditions connected with Michael, since this specific angel became much more prominent than any other angel. Consequently, he was likely to be identified with almost any unnamed biblical angel. . . . Modern scholarship should therefore try to differentiate between unnamed traditions that become part of the characteristics of Michael and more original Michael-traditions and not vice versa.[859]

In concert with this opinion, it should be recalled from earlier discussions in this study (Sections 6.3, 7.4) that Second Temple literature may simultaneously have Michael as the guardian of Israel, complete with military metaphors, and yet have a supreme commander of all the host of heaven above Michael. It may be noteworthy in the present example that this unnamed figure is twice called a god, which is never said of Michael in any Second Temple text when he is named.[860]

The closest any text comes to deifying Michael is perhaps either *1 En.* 40:1-9 or 69:13-25. The former texts refer to the four "angels of the Presence" (40:2) and goes on to list Michael as the "first" (40:9). There is an unnamed "angel of the Presence" described in *Jub.* 1:27-2:2 that is very clearly identified as "the angel who went before the camp of Israel" (1:29), the מלאך יהוה. The orientation with the מלאך יהוה is further secured by virtue of the title's origin in Isa 63:9, whose context is the exodus from Egypt. According to the Qere the verse reads: "In all their affliction he was afflicted; the angel of his Presence (מַלְאַךְ פָּנָיו) saved

---

[856] Cf. *3 Bar.* 11:4, 6, 7, 8; *2 En.* 22:6 (LR); 33:10 (LR); *T. Ab.* (Rec. A numerous times; Rec. B at 14:6).
[857] The Greek Apocalypse of Ezra dates from the 2nd to the 9th century C.E. (cf. "Greek Apocalypse of Ezra," translated by M. E. Stone [*OTP* 1:562]).
[858] M. Mach, "Michael," *DDD,* 570.
[859] Ibid., 569.
[860] This conclusion is based on this author's study of the major works on Michael, particular D. Hannah's, which seeks to survey the connections between Michael traditions and high Christology. Hannah does not produce any text where Michael is referred to as θεὸς.

them." Even though Michael is not named in *Jub.* 1:27-2:2, it is possible that Michael was viewed as Yahweh's vice-regent by the author of *1 En.* 40:1-9, but this cannot be considered certain, since "the presence" would also be in three other archangels. As noted briefly above, this situation led some Jewish writers, notably Philo, to write in terms of divine plurality with respect to both Yahweh and the Logos. The second example, *1 En.* 69:13-25, has a *saṭan* asking Michael "to show him the hidden Name, that he might pronounce the oath . . . and he [God] has placed this oath ʾAKAʿ in the hand of Michael."[861] It is generally accepted that the hidden Name is the divine Name and that the cryptic ʾAKAʿ is, by gematria, יהוה אדני. The conclusion that this author considered Michael the angel of the Name and Yahweh's vice regent is possible. However, the text does not say the name was in Michael, only that he knew it and had been given charge of it. Due to these uncertainties and the fact that Michael in the book of Daniel is merely one of the chief princes, D. Hannah recommends that the safest interpretation of the evidence is that Michael very likely became the pre-eminent angel only in the first century C.E.[862]

The presence of a deified figure distinct from Michael does occur in Second Temple literature. The clearest example is found in the *Apoc. Ab.*10:1-7, 15-17:[863]

> 1 And it came to pass when I heard the voice pronouncing such words to me that I looked this way and that. 2 And behold there was no breath in me, and my spirit was amazed, and my soul fled from me. And I became like a stone, and fell down upon the earth, for there was no longer strength in me to stand up on the earth. 3 And while I was still face down on the ground, I heard the voice of the Holy One speaking, "Go, Ya'el of the same name, through the mediation of my ineffable Name, consecrate this man and strengthen him against his trembling." 4 The angel he sent to me in the likeness of a man came, and he took me by my right hand and stood me on my feet. 5 And he said to me, "Stand up Abraham, friend of God who has loved you, let human trembling not enfold you! 6 For lo! I am sent to you to strengthen you and to bless you in the name of God, creator of heavenly and earthly things, who has loved you. 7 Be bold and hasten to him. I am Ya'el . . . 15 Stand up, Abraham! Go boldly, be very joyful and rejoice. And I (am) with you, for a venerable honor has been prepared for you by the Eternal One. 16 Go, complete the sacrifice of the command. Behold, I am assigned (to be) with you and with the generation which is predestined (to be born) from you, 17 And with me Michael blesses you for ever. Be bold, go!"

---

[861] The translation is Black's (Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch*). The marks on either side of AKA are transliterated א and ע.
[862] Darrell Hannah, *Michael and Christ*, 51-52.
[863] The *Apocalypse of Abraham* was composed at the time of the destruction of the second temple or shortly thereafter (cf. ch. 27; "Apocalypse of Abraham," translated by R. Rubinkiewicz [*OTP* 1:683]). Unless otherwise noted, passages cited are from this translation.

The passage is significant on several accounts. The angel bears the name of God, Ya'el ("Yah is El"),[864] he is in the likeness of a man, and he is explicitly distinguished from Michael (10:17). But not only does this angel bear the name of Yahweh, but later in the same text (*Apoc. Ab.*17:13) we read that Ya'el is the God of Israel. In 17:4 Abraham is commanded to worship God "on the place of highness" by reciting a song listing God's names. Abraham obeys and proclaims (*Apoc. Ab.*17:8-13):

> 8 Eternal One, Mighty One, Holy El, God autocrat 9 self-originated, incorruptible, immaculate, unbegotten, spotless, immortal, 10 self-perfected, self-devised, without father, without mother, ungenerated, 11 exalted, fiery, 12 just, lover of men, benevolent, compassionate, bountiful, jealous over me, patient one, most merciful. 13 Eli, eternal, mighty one, holy, Sabaoth, most glorious El, El, El, El, Ya'el! 14

The same deified figure appears in the *Life of Adam and Eve* 29:1-6, but in this case it is God himself who is called Ya'el.[865] The passage is quite reminiscent of occasions in the pre-exilic texts of the Hebrew Bible where Yahweh and his vice regent were virtually indistinguishable:

> 1 When the Lord had said these things, he ordered us cast out of paradise. 2 And your father (Adam) wept before the angels opposite Paradise, and the angels said to him, "What do you want us to do for you, Adam?" 3 Your father answered and said to the angels, "See you are casting me out; I beg you, let me take fragrances from Paradise, so that after I have gone out, I might bring an offering to God so that God will hear me." 4 And they (the angels) came to God and said, "Ya'el, eternal king, command that fragrant incenses from Paradise be given to Adam." 5 And God ordered Adam go come that he might take aromatic fragrances out of Paradise for his sustenance. 6 When the angels allowed him, he gathered four kinds: crocus, nard, reed, cinnamon; and other seeds for his food. And he took these and went out of Paradise. And so we came to be on the earth.

Other apparent references to a single deity level in the role of the pre-exilic מלאך יהוה deserve brief mention. In 2 Macc. 3:24ff.; 5:1-4, an unnamed angel warrior, "the Lord of spirits," appears with a host of heavenly horsemen to defend Jerusalem. In a parallel to this passage from 2 Maccabees, *T. Mos.*10:1-3 reads:

> 1 Then His kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation. Then the devil will have an end. Yea, sorrow shall be led away with him. 2 Then will be filled the hands of the angel who is in the highest place appointed. Yea, he will at once avenge them of their enemies. 3 For the Heavenly One will arise from His kingly throne. Yea, he will go forth from his holy habitation with indignation and wrath on behalf of his sons.[866]

---

[864] "Apocalypse of Abraham," (*OTP* 1:692, note. 10b).
[865] "Life of Adam and Eve," translated by M. D. Johnson (*OTP* 2:285, note 29b).
[866] "Testament of Moses," translated by J. Priest (*OTP* 1:931-932).

The angel here is a warrior ("avenge") and a priest ("his hands shall be filled").[867] He has been appointed "chief", presumably over the other angels, has a throne, and has sons. Either this is the vice regent of Yahweh, "the ruler of the gods," the one who has delegated authority over the sons of the high King, or the high God himself is called an angel. From either perspective, the divine plurality is undisguised. Scholars have noticed that the passage mirrors Yahweh's own departure from his place at the eschaton in Isa 26:21 ("For, behold, Yahweh comes out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity") and Micah 1:3 ("For, behold, Yahweh comes forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth"). Scholars have also noted that *T. Mos.*10:2 is also similar to Deut 32:43, noted for the absence of references to divine beings in MT, *contra* LXX and 4QDeut[q]. The comparison is noteworthy in that in Deut 32:43, part of an important divine council chapter, the one "avenging his sons" is Yahweh, whereas in the *Testament of Moses* the warrior is an angel.[868]

8.5 *Jewish Speculations That the Divine Vice-Regent was an Angel*

There are five criteria that scholars agree merit special consideration when seeking to understand exalted vice regency: (1) divine position (Is the figure with or near God and his throne?); (2) divine appearance (Is the figure described in the same ways as God's physical form in the Hebrew Bible?); (3) divine functions (Does the figure perform actions typically ascribed to God?); (4) divine Name (Does the figure bear the name of Yahweh, or is he described as a hypostasis[869] of the Name?); and (5) divine veneration (Is the figure worshipped, or is prayer offered to the figure?).[870] With respect to the last criterion, the exaltation of a figure most often has its roots in Exod 23:20-23; Exod 24:9ff.; Dan 7:9ff.; and Ezekiel 1, 10. It is not a coincidence that these texts are precisely those at the root of the two powers controversy since they evince a second divine personage.[871]

---

[867] Ibid., 932, n. 10a.
[868] M. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 75.
[869] It is recognized that "hypostasis nomenclature" has been criticized by scholars in the past. However, the criticisms have been carefully addressed in recent work on Jewish angelology and divine mediation. For a survey of the issues, evaluation of criticisms, and judicious responses, see Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 36-48.
[870] C. Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 31-33.
[871] Segal, *Two Powers in Heaven*, 148-149. Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1982), 78-112.

Second Temple Jewish writers devoted a good deal of time to speculating and debating about the identity of the second power in heaven. Comments will be brief with respect to angels already introduced in this chapter, so as to place emphasis on the other figures.[872]

The most widely attested exalted angel figure is Michael. Earlier in this chapter it was pointed out that *1 En.* 69:15ff. could be construed as evidence that Michael was thought to be the bearer of the divine ("hidden") Name. Michael also receives titles of exaltation, such as "archangel" and "commander in chief" of the angels, which naturally elevate him to the highest position in heaven under God. Michael was also associated with the mediation of the law to Moses (*L.A.E.* [Apoc.] Preface; *Jub.* 1:27-2:1). If Michael is in fact the angel described in *Joseph and Aseneth*, "his physical description appears to be built upon a combination of traditions, primarily the figure of the enthroned Glory in Ezek 1:26 ('a man from heaven', 'sparks shot forth from his hands and feet') . . . Dan 10:5-6 ('his face was like lightning'), and the φῶς from Gen 1:3 (LXX)."[873] The unnamed angel's description as a "man of light" (ἄνθρωπος φωτὸς) recalls the description of the Glory in *Ezekiel the Tragedian* 70-71 as an enthroned man (φῶς[874]) wearing a crown and holding a scepter.

Michael was also considered by some Jewish writers to be Yahweh's co-regent in heaven and on earth due to his status as the chief intercessor for Israel (Dan 12:1-3), a position that placed him nearest to God in Jewish belief. For example, in *T. Levi* 5:5b-6 we read:

> . . . And I said to him, "I beg you, Lord, teach me your name, so that I may call on you in the day of tribulation." 6 And he said, "I am the angel who makes intercession for the nation of Israel, that they might not be beaten."[875]

T. Dan 6:1-2 adds:

> 1 And now fear the Lord, my children, be on guard against Satan and his spirits. 2 Draw near to God and to the angel who intercedes for you, because he is the mediator between God and men for the peace of Israel. He shall stand in opposition to the kingdom of the enemy.[876]

---

[872] The list given here is not meant to be exhaustive. Only those candidates are included that most clearly meet several of Gieschen's criteria, whose literary descriptions date to the first century C.E., and that relate to the major Two Powers passages. The requirement set for this study to only include first century material thus eliminates Metatron, one of the most exalted figures in Jewish angelology. In many ways Metatron is the capstone of vice-regent traditions since he bears the name יהוה הקטן, the "lesser Yahweh." Much of the material for Metatron is found in 3 Enoch, which scholars date from the 2nd to the 5th centuries C.E. This book also has some of the most explicit divine council scenes in all of Jewish literature.

[873] J. Fossum, *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish mysticism on Early Christology* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995), 22-23.

[874] φῶς is "a poetic form of ἀνερ in Homeric literature" ("Ezekiel the Tragedian," translated by R. G. Robertson (*OTP* 2:812, n. b2).

[875] "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," translated by H. C. Kee (*OTP* 1:790).

[876] Ibid., 810.

In the 2nd century C.E., Michael's status as intercessor and lead angel came to be expanded as a mediatorial role for all nations, thereby positioning him as the Son of Man figure of Dan 7:9ff., and therefore the divine vice-regent.[877]

Gabriel was also divinized by some Jewish exegetes, a choice that most modern scholars attribute to his splendid description in Dan 10:4-6:

> 6 His body was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

Scholars have observed that there are secure links between this portrayal and Ezek 1:26-28 and 8:2. The latter reads, "Then I looked, and behold, a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the color of amber." As noted in Chapter Six, some scholars seek to identify the Son of Man in Dan 7:9ff. with Gabriel in light of his appearance.[878] His description also correlates with that of the unnamed angel in *Jos.Asen.*14:1-17:10 and Ya'el in *Apoc. Ab.* 10:1-17:21.

Perhaps surprisingly, another of the archangels, Raphael, was also considered to be the second power in heaven of exalted status. Despite the fact that he is "one of the seven archangels who stand before the Glory of the Lord" (Tobit 12:12, 15), Raphael is specifically called the "angel of the Lord" in Tob 12:22. Tob 11:14-15 also reveals that Raphael may have been considered by the writer as possessing the divine Name (reading with Codex *Sinaiticus*):[879]

> 14 Then he saw his son and embraced him, and he wept and said, "Blessed art thou, O God, and blessed is His Name for ever, and blessed are all your holy angels; May his Name be upon us. And blessed be all the angels unto all ages.15 For thou hast afflicted me, but thou hast had mercy upon me; here I see my son Tobias!"

The point offered by some scholars concerning this passage is that not only are God, His Name, and all the angels blessed, but it is possible that "His Name" is being directly addressed in context. This would mean Raphael, the angel who intervenes for Tobit, would bear the Name.

---

[877] Mach, "Michael," *DDD,* 571. Nathaniel Schmidt, "The Son of Man in the Book of Daniel," *JBL* 19 (1900): 22-28. Cf. *Apoc. Mos.* 2:1; 3:2; 49:2; *1 En.* 25; 60:4-5. See also the discussion in Chapter Six concerning Michael.
[878] J. Fossum, *Name of God*, 279, n. 61.
[879] Stuckenbruck has argued that the recension in Codex *Sinaiticus* is older than the text most often used (Stuckenbruck, *Angel*

Earlier several references to plural sons of God were noted in Fragment A of the *Prayer of Joseph*. That text is also significant for its deification of Jacob in the form of the angel Israel: "I, Jacob, who is speaking to you, am also Israel, an angel of God and a ruling spirit . . . I am he whom God called Israel, which means 'a man seeing God,' because I am the firstborn of every living thing to whom God gives life" (lines 1, 3). Jacob is confronted by a jealous archangel Uriel, whom Jacob puts in his place as "the eighth after me" (7). Jacob then declares, "I, Israel, the archangel (ἄρχάγγελος) of the Power of the Lord and the chief captain (ἀρχιχιλιάρχος) among the sons of God. Am I not Israel, the first minister before the presence (lit., face) of God."

Elsewhere in Second Temple literature these designations are linked to Michael.[880] The "Power of the Lord" is a designation used in later Jewish mysticism for the Glory of the Lord, and so some scholars have concluded that this phrase is evidence for the deification of Jacob/Israel as the Glory.[881] Commentators on this text have also long recognized that every title in this exalted description is used by Philo for the Logos.[882] The relationship of the passage to *merkabah* traditions is likewise well established, and scholars naturally see the reason for the titles and linkage to the chariot throne as the second deity figure who wrestled with Jacob.[883]

The angel Ya'el, described so transparently in the passages mentioned above as the Angel of the Lord, deserves several additional comments. By virtue of his explicit identification with the pre-exilic מלאך יהוה, scholars regard Ya'el as one of the clearest examples of a divine hypostasis in Second Temple texts.[884] In addition to bearing "the ineffable Name," Ya'el has the authority "to restrain Leviathan . . . [and] to loosen Hades" (*Apoc. Ab.* 10:10-11). The language of restraining Leviathan recalls Yahweh's speech in Job 41. In addition, Ya'el's description (11:2-3) marks his divine status:

> 2 The appearance of his body was like sapphire, and the aspect of his face was like chrysolite, and the hair of his head like snow, 3 and the turban (was) on his head, its look like that of a rainbow, and the clothing of his garments (was) purple; and a golden staff (was) in his right hand.[885]

Veneration and Christology, 164-167).

880 *2 En.* 22:6[A]; 33:10[A]; *3 Bar.* 11:6; *T. Ab.* 1:4[A].

881 Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 141 (cf. J. Fossum, *Image of the Invisible God*, 135-151).

882 "Israel" (*Conf.* 146); "angel/archangel" (*Leg.* 3.177; *Deus*, 182; *Her.* 205; *Mut.* 87; *Conf.* 146; *Somn.* 1.240); "ruling spirit" (*Abr.* 124; *QE* 2.64, 66, 68); "one seeing God" (many times; e.g., *Leg.* 2.34; 3.186, 212; *Sacr.* 134; *Conf.* 56, 72, 146, 148); "firstborn" (*Conf.* 63; *Agr.* 51); "eldest son of God" (*Leg.* 3.175; *Det.* 118; *Migr.* 6; *Conf.* 146); "chief captain" (*Conf.* 174; *Somn.* 1.241; cf. Pseudo-Justin, *Oratio ad Graecus*, 5); "first minister" (*Leg.* 3.82-88; *Gig.* 52; *Migr.* 102).

883 See the earlier discussions of Gen 28-32; 35:1-7 (noting the plural verb with האלהים) and Hos 12:3-4.

884 Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology*, 143.

885 "Apocalypse of Abraham," (*OTP* 1:694).

There are several obvious points of correspondence with Ezek 1:26-28 (radiant body, rainbow) and Ezek 28:13 (sapphire, chysolite). The white hair is identical to that of the Ancient of Days in Dan 7:9, and the turban recalls Exod 28:4, 36, where the high priest's turban bore the name of Yahweh. A second power in heaven who brandishes a sceptre also appears in the description of the "man of light" in *Ezek Trag.* 74. Yet despite the amazingly exalted status of Ya'el, he worships the Most High God along with Abraham in *Apoc. Abr.* 17:1-21.

8.6 *Jewish Speculations that the Divine Vice-Regent was a Deified Human*

The category of exalted humans as God's chief angel has received much less scholarly attention than exalted angels.[886] The designation "exalted human" refers to the belief that certain human beings were exalted to a position of rulership with God without physical death.

For example, *2 En.* 30:11-12 explicitly identifies Adam as one of God's chief angels over creation:

> 11 And on the earth I assigned him to be a second angel, honored and great and glorious. 12 And I assigned him to be a king, to reign on the earth, and to have my wisdom. And there was nothing comparable to him on the earth, even among my creatures that exist.[887]

Adam is also elevated higher than a principal angel in the *Life of Adam and Eve* (14:2) where Michael commands Satan to worship Adam, "the image of God." In the *T. Ab.*11:4, Abraham is shown a man "seated on a golden throne" who has a "terrifying" appearance "like the Master's." Abraham's guide, Michael, reveals the figure's identity in verse 9: "This is the first-formed Adam who is in such glory, and he looks at the world, since everyone has come from him."

Of all the human vice regent figures, Enoch has perhaps received the most scholarly attention. Enoch is identified as the Son of Man in the throne room scene of *1 Enoch* 71:

> 1 Thus it happened after this that my spirit passed out of sight and ascended into the heavens. And I saw the sons of the holy angels (υἱοὶ ἀγγελῶν) walking upon the flame of fire; their garments were white—and their overcoats—and the light of their faces was like snow. 2 Also I saw two rivers of fire, the light of which fire was shining like hyacinth. Then I fell on my face before the Lord of Spirits. 3 And the angel Michael, one of the archangels, seizing me by my right hand and lifting me up, led me

[886] Melchizedek is excluded from the discussion here in light of the extended treatment in Chapter Seven.
[887] "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," (*OTP* 1:152).

> out into all the secrets of mercy; and he showed me all the secrets of righteousness. 4 And he showed me all the secrets of the extreme ends of the heaven and all the reservoirs of the stars and the luminaries—from where they come out (to shine) before the faces of the holy ones . . . 8 And I saw countless angels—a hundred thousand times a hundred thousand, ten million times ten million—encircling that house. 9 Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Phanuel, and numerous (other) holy angels that are countless. 10 With them the Ancient of Days: His head is white and pure like wool and his garment is indescribable. 11 I fell on my face, my whole body mollified and my spirit transformed . . . 14 Then an angel came to me and greeted me and said to me "You, son of man, who art born in righteousness and upon whom righteousness has dwelt, the righteousness of the Ancient of Days will not forsake you."[888]

2 Enoch 22 [Rec. A] also describes this transformation of Enoch into a divine being:

> 4 And I fell down flat and did obeisance to the Lord. 5 And the Lord, with his own mouth, said to me, "Be brave, Enoch! Don't be frightened! Stand up, and stand in front of my face forever." 6 And Michael, the Lord's *archistratig*, lifted me up and brought me in front of the face of the Lord. And the Lord said to his servants, sounding them out, "Let Enoch join in and stand in front of my face forever!" 7 And the Lord's glorious ones did obeisance and said, "Let Enoch yield in accordance with your word, O Lord!" 8 And the Lord said to Michael, "Go, and extract Enoch from his earthly clothing. And anoint him with my delightful oil, and put him into clothes of my glory. 9 And so Michael did just as the Lord had said to him. He anointed me and clothed me. And the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, and its ointment like sweet dew, and its fragrance myrrh; and it is like the rays of the glittering sun. 10 And I looked at myself, and I had become like one of his glorious ones.[889]

The allusions to the divine council scene of Dan 7:9ff. are unmistakable. Some scholars have also argued that Enoch's ascent on the clouds in *1 Enoch* 14:8 is the model upon which the Son of Man description in Daniel 7 is based.[890] In *1 En.* 14:8, however, Enoch is carried upwards by the winds, not the clouds, which is not the case in Daniel 7: "Behold, clouds called me in the vision, and the mist called me . . . and in the vision winds caused me to fly." As Collins notes, while there are interesting parallels between *1 Enoch* 14 and Daniel 7, "direct dependence between Daniel and this Enoch literature cannot be demonstrated."[891] Of note for this study is the fact that this early Jewish tradition *separates* Michael from the Son of Man figure.

Moses was also considered a god by Philo, who used Exod 4:16 and 7:1, texts that refer to Moses as אלהים, as his starting point.[892] However, Philo was careful to make it clear that Moses was not like the highest God, the God of Israel.[893] Moses receives a far more dramatic exaltation in the 2nd century B.C.E. text of *Ezekiel the Tragedian.* It is Moses who is the "man of light" noted earlier (lines 68-80), the exalted figure

---

[888] "1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch," *OTP* 1:49-50
[889] "2 (Slavonic Apocalypse of) Enoch," *OTP* 1:137-138.
[890] T. F. Glasson, "The Son of Man Imagery: Enoch xiv and Daniel vii," *NTS* 23 (1976-1977): 82-90.
[891] John J. Collins, *Daniel*, 59.
[892] *Mos.* 1:158; *Somn.* 1:189; *Mut.* 128-129. In *QG* 4:8 (cf. *Mos.* 1:155-159) Philo refers to Moses as ὁ ἀρχάγγελος.
[893] *Det.* 162; *Leg.* 1:40-41; *Migr.* 84.

enthroned and worshipped as king over creation. Incredibly, God himself abdicates the throne and hands his crown to Moses:

> 68 On Sinai's peak I (Moses) saw what seemed a throne 69 so great in size it touched the clouds of heaven. 70 Upon it sat a man of noble mien, 71 becrowned, and with scepter in one hand 72 while with the other he did beckon me. 73 I made approach and stood before the throne. 74 He handed over the scepter and he bade 75 me mount the throne, and gave me the crown; 76 then he himself withdrew from off the throne. 77 I gazed upon the whole earth round about; 78 things under it, and high above the skies. 79 Then at my feet the multitude of stars 80 fell down, and I their number reckoned up.[894]

Scholars draw attention to the depiction of God as a man on the throne and His abdication of that throne to Moses as nothing less than deification of a second being.[895]

Finally, some Second Temple period texts identify the Son of Man, and hence the divine vice-regent, with an unnamed human figure. *1 En.* 46:1 describes a scene where the white-haired "Chief of days" is accompanied by a being "whose face had the appearance of a man, and his face was full of grace, like one of the holy angels." This figure is called "messiah" (anointed one) in *1 En.* 48:10; 52:4 and is further described as existing prior to creation (48:3). 4 Ezra 4:13 another figure is described as coming with the clouds and pre-existent; he is the one "whom the Most High has been keeping for many ages."

Summation

The aim of this chapter was to survey the evidence for divine plurality in Second Temple Jewish literature in order to discern congruencies between that corpus and the divine council plurality evident in canonical Hebrew texts. The terminology for divine beings in the Second Temple period lacks the precision of earlier canonical material. Nevertheless, the exaltation and geographical sovereignty of certain groups of heavenly beings echo the divine council of earlier Israelite religion. On the other hand, the concept of a second deity figure in heaven, a divine vice regent, is actually more explicit in Second Temple writings. The evidence suggests that divine plurality was a significant part of Second Temple Jewish belief, albeit consistently cast in way that made even the most exalted divine beings subservient to Yahweh, the unique God of Israel. The idea

[894] R. G. Robertson, "Ezekiel the Tragedian," *OTP* 2:811-812.
[895] Meeks, "Moses as God and King," 354-371; Pieter van der Horst, "Moses' Throne Vision in Ezekiel the Dramatist," *JJS* 34 (1983): 19-29 (esp. 25).

that Judaism in the Second Temple period must be unequivocally described in terms of intolerant monotheism cannot be sustained.

Conclusion

The goal of this dissertation was to demonstrate that the pre-exilic Israelite belief in a divine council of (בני) אלים / אלהים under Yahweh was maintained in Israel's faith after the exile and survived in at least some strains of Judaism well into the Common Era. The strategy employed in meeting this goal was threefold.

First, the dissertation offered evidence of divine plurality, including the pervasive presence of a divine vice-regent, in late canonical Hebrew texts and Second Temple period Jewish literature. After surveying the terminology and motifs that describe the divine council in both Ugaritic and pre-exilic Israelite religion, these same data were mined from canonical material dating to the exilic and post-exilic periods and non-canonical Second Temple texts. It was shown that the most dramatic evidence in both corpi for a divine council of (בני) אלים / אלהים derives from the Hellenistic period: the book of Daniel and the sectarian texts from Qumran.

Second, the currently accepted reconstruction of the development of monotheism in Israel was challenged. This challenge focused on how the current reconstruction assumes what it seeks to prove and thus lacks logical coherence. The consensus view assumes that the textual evidence for divine plurality in late canonical and non-canonical texts cannot actually express a belief in the pre-exilic divine council, because that would result in monolatry or polytheism, which assuredly gave way to monotheism after the exile. References to other gods in the council must therefore speak of angels or be rhetorical devices used to prop up monotheism, because that would *not* be monolatry or polytheism. Put another way, this study argued that it is incoherent to appeal to the textual data examined in this study to prove the validity of a monotheistic breakthrough during and after the exile, and then insist that the data must be "contextualized" by the very monotheism for which proof is being sought.

Third, this study also challenged the consensus view by pointing out how assumptions about the evolution of monotheism influence the exegesis of various passages and phrases in Deuteronomy, Deutero-Isaiah, and Psalm 82. More specifically, the dissertation demonstrated that Deuteronomy 4 and 32 evince a monolatrous worldview, a conclusion shared by many scholars of Israelite religion. The God of Deuteronomy

created the other gods (which are not idols, lest Yahweh be a idol maker) and decreed they be worshipped by the non-elect Gentile nations. This monolatrous context of Deuteronomy therefore requires that declarations that "there are no gods beside Yahweh" be understood as statements of incomparability. The same or similar phrases and syntactical constructions occur in Deutero-Isaiah and constitute the primary evidence utilized by defenders of the consensus view of Israel's monotheistic breakthrough. This dissertation contended that the reason these constructions are understood as indicating monolatry in Deuteronomy but intolerant monotheism in Deutero-Isaiah is that the presumption of the monotheistic breakthrough is brought to the text *a priori.* Dismissing the divine plurality in Deuteronomy 32 and Psalm 82 as a mere rhetorical device designed to articulate the denial of other gods was likewise considered insufficient in view of both flawed analysis and the fact that other late canonical divine council scenes in Job and Daniel can hardly be so construed.

These three lines of argumentation necessitated that the evidence for divine plurality in later canonical and non-canonical Jewish texts be considered on its own merits without the imposition of an assumed monotheistic progression. The study argued that the survival of Israel's pre-exilic divine council worldview provides greater explanatory power for the data than the consensus view of the development of monotheism. In particular, the survival of the divine council with its feature of divine vice regency provides a coherent explanation for the provenance of the belief that there were two powers in heaven, a belief common to Judaism until the second century C.E., when it was declared a heresy.

Bibliography

Aaron, David H. *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics, and Divine Imagery.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001.

Ackerman, James S. "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 82." Th.D. diss. Harvard University, 1966.

Ackerman, Susan. *Under Every Green Tree: Popular Religion in Sixth Century Judah.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 46. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992.

Afzal, Cameron. "Wheels of Time: *Merkavah* Exegesis in Revelation 4." Pages 465-482 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1998.* 2 vols. Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press 37. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.

Albright, W.F. *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan: An Historical Analysis of Two Conflicting Faiths.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968.

Alexander, Philip S. "Comparing Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Essay in Method." *Journal of Jewish Studies* 35 (Spr 1984): 1-18.

_______. "The Demonology of the Dead Sea Scrolls." Pages 331-353 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment.* Vol. 2; eds. Peter Flint and James C. Vanderkam. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Alomia, K.M. "Lesser Gods of the Ancient Near East and Some Comparisons with Heavenly Beings of the Old Testament." Ph.D. diss., Andrews University, 1987.

Arnold, Clinton. *Ephesians: Power and Magic.* Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

_______. *Powers of Darkness: Principalities and Powers in Paul's Letters.* Downer's Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity, 1992.

Aune, D. E. "Archai." Pages 77-80 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. "Archon." Pages in 82-85 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. "Orthodoxy in First Century Judaism. A Response to N. J. McEleney." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 7 (1976): 1-10.

Bampfylde, Gillian. "The Prince of the Host in the Book of Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 14:2 (1983): 129-134.

Barker, Margaret. "Enthronement and Apotheosis: The Vision in Revelation 4-5." Pages 217-227 in *New Heaven and New Earth Prophecy and the Millennium: Studies in Honour of Anthony Gelston.* Edited by P. J. Harland and C. T. R. Hayward. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

_______. *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God.* Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Publishers, 1992.

_______. *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity.* London: SPCK, 1987.

Barr, James. "Hypostatization of Linguistic Phenomena in Modern Theological Interpretation." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 7 (1962): 85-92.

_______. *The Problem of Israelite Monotheism*. Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society 17. Glasgow: Glasgow University, 1957-1958.

Barton, Tamsyn. *Ancient Astrology.* New York: Routledge, 1994

Batto, B. "The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty." *Biblica* 68:2 (1987): 153-177.

_______. "Zedeq." Pages 929-934 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Bauckham, Richard. "The Throne of God and the Worship of Jesus." Pages 43-69 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Baumgarten, J. M. "The Heavenly Tribunal and the Personification of Ṣedeq in Jewish Apocalyptic." Pages 219-239 in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Romischen Welt* II, Principat 19.1. Edited by Wolfgang Haase. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1979.

Becking, Bob. "Continuity and Discontinuity After the Exile." Pages 1-8 in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times. Oudtestamentische Studien* XLII. Edited by Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Bentzen, A. *Daniel*. Handbuch zum Alten Testament 19. 2nd edition. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1952.

_______. *King and Messiah*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1952.

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. *The Social Construction of Reality.* New York: Penguin, 1966.

Beuken, W.A.M. "Servant and Herald of Good Tidings: Isaiah 61 as an Interpretation of Isaiah 40-55." Pages 411-442 in *The Book of Isaiah: Le Livre d'Isaie.* Edited by J. Vermeylen. Bibliotheca ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 81. Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1989.

Bickerman, Elias J. *The God of the Maccabees: Studies on the Meaning and Origin of the Maccabean Revolt.* Translated by H.R. Moehring. Studies in the Judaism of Late Antiquity 32. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979.

Black, Matthew. *The Book of Enoch, or 1 Enoch: A New English Edition With Commentary and Textual Notes.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1985.

_______. "The Throne-Theophany Prophetic Commission and the 'Son of Man'." Pages 57-73 in *Jews, Greeks, and Christians: Essays in Honor of W.D. Davies.* Edited by Robert Hamerton-Kelly and Robin Scroggs. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976.

Boccaccini, Gabriele. *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways Between Qumran and Enochic Judaism.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

_______. "Multiple Judaisms: A New Understanding of the Context of Earliest Christianity." *Bible Review* 11 (Fall 1995), 38-41, 46.

_______. "Qumran and the Enoch Groups." Pages 63-92 in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran.* Edited by J.H. Charlesworth. N. Richland Hills, Texas: BIBAL Press, 2000.

Boer, P.A.H. de. "The Counsellor" Pages 42-71 in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East: Presented to Professor Harold Henry Rowley.* Edited by M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 3. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955.

Bousset, Wilhelm. *Kyrious Christos: Geschichte des Christusglaubens bis Irenaeus.* 5th ed. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965. Translated by John E. Steely. Repr., Nashville: Abingdon, 1970.

Buttenwieser, M. *The Psalms*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1969.

Byrne, B. *"Sons of God"—"Seed of Abraham": A Study of the Idea of the Sonship of God of All Christians in Paul Against the Jewish Background.* Analecta biblica 83. Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1979.

Capes, David. *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology.* Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1992.

Carr, Wesley. *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning, and Development of the Pauline Phrase* hai archai kai hai exousiai. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Carrell, Peter R. *Jesus and the Angels: Angelology and the Christology of the Apocalypse of John.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Carroll, R.P. "Psalm 78: Vestiges of a Tribal Polemic." *Vetus Testamentum* 21 (1971): 133-150.

Casey, P. M. "Monotheism, Worship, and Christological Development in the Pauline Churches." Pages 214-233 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 63. Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Cassuto, U. "Baal and Mot in the Ugaritic Texts." *Israel Exploration Journal* 12 (1962): 77-86.

Charlesworth, James H. "The Jewish Roots of Christology: The Discovery of the Hypostatic Voice." *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 39 (1986): 19-41.

_______. "The Portrayal of the Righteous as an Angel." Pages 135-151 in *Ideal Figures in Ancient Judaism: Profiles and Paradigms.* Edited by John J. Collins and George W.E. Nickelsburg. Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies 12. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1980.

Charlesworth, James H., ed. *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha.* 2 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1983, 1985.

Chester, Andrew. "Jewish Messianic Expectations and Mediatorial Figures and Pauline Christology." Pages 17-89 in *Paulus und antike Judentum: Tübingen-Durham Symposium im*

Gedenken an den 50. Todestag Adolf Schlatters. Edited by Martin Hengel and Ulrich Heckel. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 58. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991.

Christensen, Duane L. *Deuteronomy 21:10-34:12.* Word Biblical Commentary 6B. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2002.

Christofferson, Olle. *The Earnest Expectation of the Creature: The Flood Tradition as the Matrix of Romans 8:18-27.* Coniectanea Biblica New Testament Series 32. Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990.

Clifford, Richard J. *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament*. Harvard Semitic Monographs 4. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972.

_______. "The Tent of El and the Israelite Tent of Meeting." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 33 (1971): 221-227.

Clines, D. J. A. "Job 5, 1-8: A New Exegesis." *Biblica* 62 (1981): 185-194.

_______. *Job 1-20.* Word Biblical Commentary 17. Dallas: Word Books, 1989.

Cohen, H. R. *Biblical Hapax Legomena in the Light of Akkadian and Ugaritic.* Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 37. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978.

Cohon, Samuel S. "The Unity of God: A Study in Hellenistic and Rabbinic Theology." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 26 (1955): 425-479.

Collins, Adela Yarbro. “The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses.” Pages 59-92 in *Death, Ecstasy, and Other Worldly Journeys.* Edited by John J. Collins and Michael Fishbane. Albany, New York: SUNY Press, 1995.

_______. "The Worship of Jesus and the Imperial Cult.” Pages 234-257 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 63. Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Collins, John J. "Apocalyptic Genre and Mythic Allusions in Daniel." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 21 (1981): 83-100.

_______. *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel.* Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

_______. “The Herald of Good Tidings: Isaiah 61:1-3 and Its Actualization in the Dead Sea Scrolls.” Pages 225-240 in *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders.* Edited by Craig Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997.

_______. “The Mythology of Holy War in Daniel and the Qumran War Scroll: A Point of Transition in Jewish Apocalyptic.” *Vetus Testamentum* 25 (1975): 596-612.

_______. “Powers in Heaven: God, Gods, and Angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls.” Pages 9-28 in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Edited by John J. Collins and Robert Kugler. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.

_______. “The Son of Man in First Century Judaism.” *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992): 448-466.

______. “Varieties of Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods.” *Journal of Religion* 77:4 (Oct 1997): 605-611.

_______. “Watcher.” Pages 893-895 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Cooke, Gerald. "The Sons of (the) God(s)." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 76 (1964): 22-47.

Craigie, P. *Psalms 1-50.* Word Biblical Commentary 19. Waco, TX: Word Publishing, 1983.

Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

_______. “The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah.” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12 (1953): 274-277.

_______. “The Olden Gods in Ancient Near Eastern Creation Myths.” Pages 329-338 in *Magnalia Dei, The Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright.* Edited by F.M. Cross, P.D. Miller, and W.E. Lemke. New York: Doubleday and Company, 1976.

_______. “The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth.” *Journal of Theology and the Church* 5 (1968): 1-25.

Cross, Frank Moore and David Noel Freedman. *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry.* Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975. Repr., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997.

Dahood, M. "Ancient Semitic Deities in Syria and Palestine." Pages 65-94 in *Le Antiche Divinita Semitiche.* Studi Semitici 1. Edited by S. Moscati. Rome: Centro di Studi Semitici, 1958.

_______. *Psalms I. Anchor Bible* 16. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

_______. *Ras Shamra Parallels.* Vol. I of Analecta Orientalia 49. Edited by L. R. Fisher. Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1972.

Davidson, Maxwell J. *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1-36; 72-108 and Sectarian Writings from Qumran*. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 11. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992.

Davies, Philip R. “Judaisms in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Case of the Messiah.” Pages 219-223 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000.

Davila, James R. “The Dead Sea Scrolls and Merkavah Mysticism.” Pages 249-264 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000.

_______. “Heavenly Ascents in the Dead Sea Scrolls.” Pages 461-485 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment*, vol. II. Edited by Peter W. Flint and James C. Vanderkam. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

_______. “Melchizedek: King, Priest, and God.” Pages 217-234 in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: Challenge or Response?* Edited by S. Daniel Breslauer. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.

_______. "Of Methodology, Monotheism, and Metatron: Introductory Reflections on Divine Mediators and the Origins of the Worship of Jesus." Pages 3-18 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 63. Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Day, John. "Asherah in the Hebrew Bible and Northwest Semitic Literature.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 105 (1986): 385-408.

_______. "The Canaanite Inheritance of the Israelite Monarchy.” Pages 72-90 in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar.* Edited by John Day. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 270. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2000.

_______. “Echoes of Baal's Seven Thunders and Lightnings in Psalm 29 and Habakkuk 3:9 and the Identity of the Seraphim in Isaiah 6.” *Vetus Testamentum* 29:2 (1979): 143-151.

_______. *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

_______. *Psalms.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990.

Delcor, M. “Melchizedek from Genesis to the Qumran Texts and the Epistle to the Hebrews.” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 2:2 (1971): 122.

Dequeker, L. "The Saints of the Most High." *Oudtestamentische Studien* 18 (1973): 108-187.

Deurloo, Karel A. "The One God and All Israel in Its Generations." Pages 31-46 in *Studies in Deuteronomy: In Honor of C. J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday.* Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 53. Edited by F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, J.T.A.G.M. van Ruiten, and A.S. van der Woude. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Deutsch, Nathaniel. *Guardians of the Gate: Angelic Vice Regency in Late Antiquity.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Dever, William G. “The Contribution of Archaeology to the Study of Canaanite and Early Israelite Literature.” Pages 209-248 in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross.* Edited by Patrick D. Miller, et. al. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Dietrich, M. and O. Loretz. "Die Baʿal-Titel *bʿl ʾarṣ* und *ʾaliy qrdm*." *Ugarit Forschungen* 12 (1980): 391-393.

Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín. *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani and Other Places.* Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens 8. KTU: 2nd ed. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995.

Dijkstra, M. “Yahweh-El or El-Yahweh?” Pages 42-52 in *“Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin . . .” Collected Communications to the XIVth Congress of the International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament, Paris 1992.* Beitrage zur Erforschun des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentum 28; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996.

Dimant, Devorah. “Men as Angels: The Self-Image of the Qumran Community.” Pages 93-103 in *Religion and Politics in the Ancient Near East.* Edited by Adele Berlin. Bethesda, MD: University Press of America, 1996.

Donner H. and W. Rollig. *Kanaanaische und aramaische Inschriften, Mit einem Beitrage von O. Rossler.* 4th ed. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1976-1979

du Toit Laubscher, F. “God’s Angel of Truth and Melchizedek: A Note on 11QMelch 13b.” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 3 (1972): 46-51.

Duncan, Julie. “A Critical Edition of Deuteronomy Manuscripts from Qumran, Cave IV. 4QDt ^{b}, 4QDt ^{e}, 4QDt ^{h}, 4QDt ^{j}, 4QDt ^{b}, 4QDt ^{k}, 4QDt ^{l}.” Ph.D. diss. Harvard University, 1989.

Dunn, James D. G. “Was Christianity a Monotheistic Faith From the Beginning?” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 35 (1982): 303-336.

Eissfeldt, O. "El and Yahweh." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 1 (1956): 25-37.

Elnes E.E. and P.D. Miller. "Elyon." Pages 293-299 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Emerton, J. A. "The Origin of the Son of Man Imagery." *Journal of Theological Studies* 9:2 (October, 1958): 227-242.

_______. “The Site of Salem.” Pages 45-71 in *Studies in the Pentateuch.* Edited by J.A. Emerton. Vetus Testamentum Supplements 41. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1990

Eshel, Esther. “4Q471b: A Self-Glorification Hymn.” *Revue de Qumran* 17 (1996): 177-203.

Eshel, Esther. “The Identification of the ‘Speaker’ of the Self-Glorification Hymn.” Pages 619-635 in *The Provo International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls.* Edited by Donald W. Parry and Eugene Ulrich. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Feldmeier, R. “Mediator II.” Pages 558-560 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

______. “World Rulers.” Pages 908-909 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Ferch, Arthur J. "Daniel 7 and Ugarit: A Reconsideration." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99 (1980): 75-86.

______. *The Son of Man in Daniel 7*. Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 6. Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1979

Ferrera, A. J. and Simon B. Parker, "Seating Arrangements at Divine Banquets." *Ugarit Forschungen* 4 (1972): 37-39.

Fishbane, Michael. “Some Forms of Divine Appearance in Ancient Jewish Thought.” Pages 261-270 in *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism.* Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989.

Fisher, R.W. “The Herald of the Good News in Deutero-Isaiah (40:9; 41:27; 52:7).” Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 1 (1974): 117-132.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1: A Commentary* Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1971.

_______. “The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title.” Pages 115-142 in *A Wandering Aramaean: Collected Aramaic Essays.* Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 25. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979.

Fletcher-Louis, Crispin H. T. *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology, and Soteriology.* Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 94. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997.

_______. “Wisdom Christology and the Parting of the Ways Between Judaism and Christianity.” Pages 52-68 in *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries.* Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Brook W. R. Pearson. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 192. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Flint, Peter. “‘Apocrypha,’ Other Previously-Known Writings, and ‘Pseudepigrapha’ in the Dead Sea Scrolls.” Pages 24-66 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls After Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment.* Vol. 2. Edited by Peter Flint and James C. Vanderkam. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Flusser, D. *The Crucible of Christianity: Judaism, Hellenism, and the Historic Background of the Christian Faith.* New York, 1969.

Fontenrose, J. “Dagon and El.” *Oriens* 10 (1957): 277-279.

Fossum, Jarl E. *The Image of the Invisible God: Essays on the Influence of Jewish Mysticism on Early Christology.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1995.

_______. *The Name of God and the Angel of the Lord: Samaritan and Jewish Concepts of Intermediation and the Origin of Gnosticism.* Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 36; Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1985.

Fowler, Mervyn D. “The Meaning of *lipnê YHWH* in the Old Testament.” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 99 (1987): 384-390.

Freedman, David Noel. “Who is Like Thee Among the Gods? The Religion of Early Israel.” Pages 315-336 in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross.* Edited by Patrick D. Miller, et.al. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Fulco, W. *The Canaanite God Resheph.* New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society, 1976.

Gager, John. *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Paganism and Christian Antiquity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Galling, K. "Der Ehrenname Elisas und die Entruckung Elias." *Zeitschrift fürTheologie und Kirche* 53 (1956): 129-148.

Gammie, John G. “The Angelology and Demonology in the Septuagint of the Book of Job.” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 56 (1985): 1-19.

Gibson, Arthur. *Biblical Semantic Logic: A Preliminary Analysis.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1981.

Gibson, J.C.L. "The Theology of the Ugaritic Baal Cycle." *Orientalia* 53 (1984): 202-219.

Gieschen, Charles. *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence.* Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 42. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1998.

Glasson, T. F. “The Son of Man Imagery: Enoch xiv and Daniel vii.” *New Testament Studies* 23 (1976-1977): 82-90.

Gnuse, Robert Karl. *No Other Gods: Emergent Monotheism in Israel.* Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 241. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997).

Goldingay, J. "'Holy Ones on High' in Daniel 7:18.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988): 497-499.

Grabbe, L. L. "Hebrew *pāʿal* / Ugaritic *bʿl* and the Supposed *b / p* Interchange." *Ugarit Forschungen* 11 (1979): 307-314.

_______. “Orthodoxy in First Century Judaism. What Are the Issues?” *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 8 (1977): 149-153.

Grave, Cecelia. “The Etymology of Northwest Semitic *ṣapanu*.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 12 (1980): 221-229.

Gray, J. *The Legacy of Canaan.* 2nd ed. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1965.

Greenspahn, F. *Hapax Legomenon in Biblical Hebrew.* Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 74. Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984.

Gruenwald, Ithamar. "Reflections on the Nature and Origins of Jewish Mysticism." Pages 25-57 in *Gershom Scholem's Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism 50 Years After*. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993.

Hallo, William W., ed. *Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World.* Vol. 1 of *The Context of Scripture.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997.

Halperin, David J. "Ascension or Invasion: Implications of the Heavenly Journey in Ancient Judaism." *Religion* 18 (1988): 47-67.

______. *The Faces of the Chariot: Early Jewish Responses to Ezekiel's Vision*. Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 16. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1988.

_______. "Merkabah Midrash in the Septuagint." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101:3 (1982): 351-363.

Handy, Lowell K. *Among the Host of Heaven: The Syro-Palestinian Pantheon as Bureaucracy.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994.

______. "The Appearance of Pantheon in Judah." Pages 27-43 in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaisms.* Edited by Diana Vikander Edelman. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995.

_______. "The Authorization of Divine Power and the Guilt of God in the Book of Job: Useful Ugaritic Parallels." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 60 (1993): 107-118.

_______. "Dissenting Deities or Obedient Angels: Divine Hierarchies in Ugarit and the Bible." *Biblical Research* XXXV (1990): 18-35.

_______. "Hezekiah's Unlikely Reform." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 100 (1998): 111-115.

_______. "One Problem Involved in Translating to Meaning: An Example of Acknowledging Time and Tradition." *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 10:1 (1996): 1-19.

______. "A Solution for the Problem of Many MLKM." *Ugarit Forschungen* 20 (1988): 57-59.

Hannah, Darrell D. *Michael and Christ: Michael Traditions and Angel Christology in Early Christianity.* Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 109. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1999.

Hartman, Louis F. and Alexander A. DiLella. *The Book of Daniel*. Anchor Bible 23. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1978.

Hayman, Peter. "Monotheism - A Misused Word in Jewish Studies?" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 42:1 (Spring 1991): 1-15.

Haywood, Robert. "Heaven and Earth in Parallel: The Key Role of Angels in Ancient Judaism." Pages 57-74 in *Christ.* London: SPCK, 1996.

Heiser, Michael S. "The Mythological Provenance of Isa. 14:12-15: A Reconsideration of the Ugaritic Material." *Vetus Testamentum* 51:3 (2001): 354-369.

Herrmann, W. "Baal Zebub." Pages 154-156 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. "Rider Upon the Clouds." Pages 703-705 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Hoffman, Yair. "The Concept of 'Other Gods' in Deuteronomistic Literature." Pages 66-84 in *Politics and Theopolitics in the Bible and Postbiblical Literature.* Edited by Henning Graf Reventlow, Yari Hoffman, and Benjamin Uffenheimer. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 171. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994.

Hoffner, H. "Second Millennium Antecedents to the Hebrew אוב," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 86 (1967): 385-401.

Horbury, W. T. "The Messianic Associations of 'The Son of Man.'" *Journal of Theological Studies* 36 (1985): 34-55.

Horst, P. W. van der. "Dominion." Page 262 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Hurtado, Larry. "The Binitarian Shape of Early Christian Worship." Pages 187-213 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 63. Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

_______. "First-Century Jewish Monotheism." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 71 (1998): 3-26.

Hurvitz, A. "The Date of the Prose Tale of Job Linguistically Reconsidered." *Harvard Theological Review* 67 (1974): 17-34.

Jefferson, H.G. "Is Psalm 110 Canaanite?" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 73 (1954): 152-156.

Johnson, Aubrey R. *The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God.* Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1961.

Johnson, Luke T. "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 436-441.

Kapelrud, A.S. *Baal in the Ras Shamra Texts.* Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gad, 1952
Kingsbury, Edwin C. "The Prophets and the Council of Yahweh." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 279-286.

Knoppers, Gary. "David's relation to Moses: The Contexts, Contents, and Conditions of the Davidic Promises." Pages 91-118 in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar.* Edited by John Day. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 270. Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2000.

Kobelski, P. J. *Melchizedek and Melchiresha*ʿ*.* Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 10. Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Society, 1981.

Kockert, M. “Fear of Isaac.” Pages 329-331 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Jakob Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995.

Kooij, Arie. van der. “The Ending of the Song of Moses: On the Pre-Masoretic Version of Deut. 32:43.” Pages 93-100 in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honor of C.J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday.* Edited by F. Garcia Martinez. Vetus Testamentum Supplement 53. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Korpel, M.C.A. "Creator of All.” Pages 208-211 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine.* Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1990.

Kraus, Hans-Joachim. *Psalms 60-150.* Translated by Hilton C. Oswald. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993.

Kruger, P. A. “Rank Symbolism in the Baal Epic: Some Further Indicators.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 27 (1995): 170.

Kuhn, Harold B. “The Angelology of the Non-Canonical Jewish Apocalypses.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 67:3 (1948): 217-232.

Kvanvig, Helge S. *Roots of Apocalyptic: The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and the Son of Man*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988.

Labuschagne, C. L. *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966.

Lelli, F. “Stars.” Pages 809-815 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Lewis, J. P. *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968.

Lewis, Theodore J. *Cults of the Dead in Ancient Israel and Ugarit.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 39. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989.

L'Heureux, Conrad. *Rank among the Canaanite Gods: El, Baʿal, and the Rephaʾim.*. Harvard Semitic Monographs 21. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1979.

Lim, T.H. “11QMelch, Luke 4, and the Dying Messiah.” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 43 (1992): 90-92.

Lipinski, E. "El's Abode: Mythological Traditions Related to Mount Hermon and to the Mountains of Armenia." Pages 13-69 in *Orientalia lovaniensia periodica* 2 (1971): 13-69.

______. *Le Poème Royal du Psaume 89: 1-5, 20-38.* Paris: Bagalla, 1967.

Loewenstamm, S.E. "Grenzgebiete ugaritischer Sprach- und Stilvergleichung." *Ugarit Forschungen* 3 (1971): 93-100.

Lohfink, Norbert. "The Cult Reform of Josiah of Judah: 2 Kings 22-35 as a Source for the History of Israelite Religion." Pages 459-475 in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross.* Edited by Patrick D. Miller, et.al. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

Ludwig, Theodore M. "Monotheism." *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 10. Edited by Mircea Eliade. New York: MacMillan, 1987.

Lust, J. "Daniel 7,13 and the Septuagint." *Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 54 [1978]: 62-69.

Luyten, J. "Primeval and Eschatological Overtones in the Song of Moses (Dt 32, 1-43)." Pages 341-347 in *Das Deuteronomium: Entstehung, Gestalt, und Botschaft.* Edited by Norbert Lohfink. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1985.

MacDonald, Nathan. *Deuteronomy and the Meaning of 'Monotheism'.* Forschungen zum Alten Testament Reihe 2 Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2003.

Mach, M. "Michael." Pages 569-572 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Maier, S. A. "Angel of Yahweh." Pages 53-59 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Marcos, Natalio Fernandez. *The Septuagint in Context: An Introduction to the Greek Versions of the Bible.* Translated by Wilfred G. Watson. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000.

Marcus, Ralph. "Divine Names and Attributes in Hellenistic Jewish Literature." Pages 43-120 in *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 1931-32.* New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1933.

Martinez, Florentino Garcia, and Eibert J.C. Tigchelaar, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition, vol. 1: 1Q1-4Q273.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997.

May, Herbert G. "The King in the Garden of Eden: A Study of Ezekiel 28:12-19." Pages 166-176 in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*. Edited by Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962.

McCarter, P. Kyle. "Aspects of the Religion of the Israelite Monarchy: Biblical and Epigraphic Data" Pages 137-156 in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross.* Edited by Patrick D. Miller, et.al. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

McEleney, N. J. "Orthodoxy in Judaism in the First Christian Century." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 9 (1978): 83-88.

McGrath, James, and Jerry Truex. "'Two Powers' and Early Jewish and Christian Monotheism." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. Denver, CO. Cited 1 January 2003. Online: http://www.iwu.edu/~religion/ejcm/McGrath_SBL_2001_TwoPowers.htm.

Meek, T. J. "Monotheism and the Religion of Israel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 61 (1942): 21-43.

Meeks, Wayne. "Moses as God and King." Pages 354-371 in *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968.

Mettinger, T. N. D. "Cherubim." Pages 189-192 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies.* Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series 18. Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982.

______. *King and Messiah: The Civil and Sacral Legitimation of the Israelite Kings.* Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series 8. Lund: C.W.K. Gleerup, 1976

Meyers, Carol L. and Eric M. Meyers. *Haggai, Zechariah 1-8*. Anchor Bible 25B. New York: Doubleday, 1987.

Milik, J.T. "Fragment d'une Source du Psautier (4Q Ps 89) et fragments des Jubilés, du document de Damas." *Revue Biblique* 73 (1966): 94-106.

______. "Milkî-ṣedeq et Milkî -rešaʿ dans les anciens écrit juifs et chrétiens." *Journal of Jewish Studies* 23 (1972): 95-144.

Miller, Cynthia L. "Pivotal Issues in Analyzing the Verbless Clause." Pages 3-17 in *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew: Linguistic Approaches.* Edited by Cynthia L. Miller. *Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic* 1. Edited by M. O'Connor and Cynthia L. Miller. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999.

Miller, M. "The Function of Isaiah 61:1-2 in 11QMelchizedek." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969): 467-469.

Miller, Patrick D. "Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as Cosmic-Political Symbol." Pages 422-444 in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays.* Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 267. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

_______. *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.

_______. "The Divine Council and the Prophetic Call to War." *Vetus Testamentum* 18 (1968): 100-107.

_______. "Fire in the Mythology of Canaan and Israel." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 27 (1965): 257-258.

_______. "Israelite Religion." Pages 142-181 in *Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Collected Essays*. Edited by Patrick D. Miller. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 267. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Montgomery, James A. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1927.

Moor, Johannes C. de. *The Rise of Yahwism: The Roots of Israelite Monotheism.* Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium XCI. Leuven: University Press / Uitgeverij Peeters, 1990.

_______. *The Seasonal Pattern in the Ugaritic Myth of Baʿalu According to the Version of Ilimilku.* Alter Orient und Altes Testament 16. Kevelaer: Kevelaer & Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1971.

_______. "The Semitic Pantheon of Ugarit." *Ugarit Forschungen* 2 (1970): 187-228.

Morgenstern, J. "The Mythological Background of Psalm 82." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 14 (1939): 29-132.

Mosca, P. "Ugarit and Daniel 7: A Missing Link." *Biblica* 67 (1986): 496-517.

Moscati, S. *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages*. 2nd ed.; Wiesbaden: Harrassowtiz, 1980.

Mowinckel, S. "Drive and / or Ride in the Old Testament." *Vetus Testamentum* 12 (1962): 278-299.

Muilenburg, J. "The Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages of the Particle כי in the Old Testament." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 32 (1961): 135-160.

Mullen, E. Theodore. *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 24. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980.

_______. "The Divine Witness and the Davidic Royal Grant: Ps 89:37-38." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 102:2 (1983): 207-218.

Murray, R. "The Origin of Aramaic ʿîr, Angel." *Orientalia* 53 (1984): 304-317.

_______. "Prophecy and Cult." Pages 200-216 in *Israel's Prophetic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Peter Ackroyd.* Edited by R. Coggins, A. Phillips, and M. Knibb. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Newsom, Carol A. "He Has Established for Himself Priests: Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath *Shirot*." Pages 101-120 in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The New York University Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin.* Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman; Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 8. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990.

_______. "'Sectually Explicit' Literature from Qumran." Pages 167-187 in *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters.* Edited by W.H. Propp, B. Halpern, and D.N. Freedman. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

_______. *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. A Critical Edition.* Harvard Semitic Monographs 27. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985.

Nickelsburg, George. *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch Chapters 1-36, 81-108.* Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.

_______. "The Books of Enoch at Qumran: What We Know and What We Need to Think About." Pages 99-113 in *Antikes Judentum und Fruhes Christentum: Festschrift für Hartmut Stegemann*

zum 65. Geburstag. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 97. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999.

Niebuhr, K.W. "4Q521, 2 II – Ein Eschatologischer Psalm." *The Qumran Chronicle* 5 (1995): 93-96.

Niehr, Herbert. "Host of Heaven." Pages 428-430 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

_______. "Religio-Historical Aspects of the 'Early Post-Exilic' Period." Pages 228-244 in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post-Exilic Times. Oudtestamentische Studien* XLII. Edited by Bob Becking and Marjo C.A. Korpel. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Nielsen, Kirsten. *Yahweh as Prosecutor and Judge: An Investigation of the Prophetic Lawsuit Rîb-Pattern* Translate by Frederick Cryer. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 9. Sheffield: University of Sheffield, 1978.

Nissen, Marti. "Prophets and the Divine Council." Pages 4-19 in *Kein Land für sich allein: Studien zum Kulturkontakt in Kanaan, Israel/Palastina und Ebirnari für Manfred Weippert zum y65. Geburstag.* Edited by Ulrich Hubner und Ernst Axel Knauf. Orbis biblicus et orientalis 186. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 2002.

Nitzan, Bilha. "4QBerakhot (4Q286-290): A Preliminary Report." Pages 53-71 in New Qumran Texts and Studies: Proceedings of the First Meeting of the International Organization for Qumran Studies, Paris 1992. Edited by George J. Brooke and Florentino Garcia Martinez. Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 15. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Noort, Ed. "Gan-Eden in the Context of the Mythology of the Hebrew Bible." Pages 21-36 in *Paradise Interpreted: Representations of Biblical Paradise in Judaism and Christianity.* Edited by Gerard P. Luttikhuizen. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Noth, Martin. "The Holy Ones of the Most High." Pages 215-228 in *The Laws of the Pentateuch and Other Essays.* Edited by Martin Noth. London: SCM, 1984.

Obermann, J. *Ugaritic Mythology.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948.

Oldenburg, Ulf. "Above the Stars of El: El in Ancient South Arabic Religion." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 82 (1970): 187-208.

_______. *The Conflict Between El and Baal in Canaanite Religion.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969.

Olmo Lete, G. del. "Bashan." Pages 161-163 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Olmo Lete, G. del and Joaquín Sanmartín. *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition.* Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson. Handbuch der Orientalistik 67. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2003.

_______. *Canaanite Religion According to the Liturgical Texts of Ugarit.* Translated by Wilfred G. E. Watson. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1999.

Olyan, Saul M. *Asherah and the Cult of Yahweh.* Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 34. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988.

_______. *A Thousand Thousands Served Him: Exegesis and the Naming of Angels in Ancient Judaism.* Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1993.

Otzen, Benedikt. "Michael and Gabriel: Angelological Problems in the Book of Daniel." Pages 114-124 in *The Scriptures and the Scrolls: Studies in Honor of A.S. van der Woude on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday.* Edited by F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, and C.J. Labuschagne. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992.

Paas, Stefan. *Creation and Judgement: Creation Texts in Some Eighth Century Prophets. Oudtestamentische Studien* XLVII. E. J. Brill, 2003.

Page, H.R. *The Myth of Cosmic Rebellion: A Study of its Reflexes in Ugaritic and Biblical Literature.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Pakkala, Juha. *Intolerant Monotheism in the Deuteronomistic History.* Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 76. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999.

Parker, Simon B. "The Beginning of the Reign of God – Psalm 82 as Myth and Liturgy." *Revue Biblique* 102 (1995): 532-559.

_______. "Sons of (the) God(s)" Pages 794-798 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Pettinato, G. *The Archives of Ebla.* New York: Doubleday, 1981.

Pike, D. M. "The 'Congregation of YHWH' in the Bible and at Qumran." *Revue de Qumran* 17 (1996): 233-240.

Pola, Thomas. "Form and Meaning in Zechariah 3." Pages 156-167 in *Yahwism After the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era.* Edited by Rainer Albertz and Bob Becking. Studeis in Theology and Religion 5. Van Gorcum, 2003.

Polley, M.E. "Hebrew Prophecy Within the Council of Yahweh Examined in its Ancient Near Eastern Setting." Pages 141-156 in *Scripture in Context: Essays in the Comparative Method.* Edited by C.D. Evans, W.W. Hallo, and J.B. White. Pittsburgh Theological Monograph Series 34. Pittsburgh, 1980.

Pope, Marvin. *El in the Ugaritic Texts.* Vetus Testamentum Supplements 2. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955.

______. *Job.* Anchor Bible 15. New York: Doubleday, 1965.

Puech, E. "Notes sur le manuscript del XIQMelchisedeq." *Revue de Qumran* 12 (1987): 483-512.

Rahlfs, Alfred. ed. *Septuaginta: Vetus Testamentum Graecum, Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Göttingensis editum.* Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 1979.

Rainbow, Paul A. "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology." *Novum Testamentum* 33 (1991): 78-91.

_______. “Monotheism and Christology in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6.” D. Phil. diss., Oxford University, 1987.

Rechenmacher, H. “*Außer mir gibt es keinen Gott!” Eine sprach- und literaturwissenschaftliche Studie zur Ausschließlichkeitsformel.* ATSAT 49. St. Ottilien, 1997.

Riesenfeld, Harold. “Sons of God and Ecclesia: An Intertestamental Analysis.” Pages 89-104 in *Renewing the Judeo-Christian Wellsprings.* New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1987.

Ringgren, Helmer. *Israelite Religion.* Translated by D. Green. London: SPCK, 1966.

Roberts, J. J. M. *The Earliest Semitic Pantheon.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972.

______. “Job and the Israelite Religious Tradition.” Pages 110-116 in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays.* Edited by J.J.M. Roberts. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002.

Robinson, H. Wheeler. "The Council of Yahweh." *Journal of Theological Studies* 45 (1944): 151-157.

Rofé, Alexander. "The Monotheistic Argumentation in Deuteronomy IV 32-40: Contents, Composition, and Text." *Vetus Testamentum* 35:4 (1985): 434-445.

Rollig, W. “Lebanon.” Pages 506-507 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Rosenberg, Roy A. "The God Ṣedeq." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 36 (1965): 161-177.

Röttger, Hermann. *Mal’ak Jahwe—Bote von Gott: Die Vorstellung von Gottes Boten im hebräischen Alten Testament.* Regensburger Studien zur Theologie 13. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1978.

Rowland, Christopher. "The Visions of God in Apocalyptic Literature." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 10 (1979): 137-154.

Rowley, H. H. “Moses and Monotheism.” Pages 35-63 in *From Moses to Qumran: Studies in the Old Testament.* New York: Association Press, 1963.

_______. “Zadok and Nehushtan.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 58 (1939): 113-141.

Ruiten, Jacques T. A. G. M. van. *Primeaval History Interpreted: The Rewriting of Genesis 1-11 in the Book of Jubilees.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000.

_______. “The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1-12 in *Jubilees* 5:1-19.” Pages 59-75 in *Studies in the Book of Jubilees.* Edited by Mathias Albani, Jorg Frey, and Armin Lange. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1997.

_______. "The Use of Deuteronomy 32:39 in Monotheistic Controversies in Rabbinic Literature." Pages 223-241 in *Studies in Deuteronomy in Honor of C.J. Labuschagne on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday.* Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 53. Edited by F. Garcia Martinez, A. Hilhorst, J. T. A. G. M. van Ruiten, and A.S. van der Woude. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994.

Salters, R. B. “Psalm 82,1 and the Septuagint.” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 103 (1991): 226.

Sanders, Paul. *The Provenance of Deuteronomy 32. Oudtestamentische Studien* 37. Edited by Johannes de Moor. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Schaeffer, Claude F.A. *Ugaritica V: Nouveaux texts accadiens, hourrites et ugaritiques.* Paris: Paul Guenther, 1968.

Schiffman, L. *From Text to Tradition: A History of the Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism.* Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1991.

Schloen, J. David. *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the Ancient Near East.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2001.

_______. "The Patrimonial Household in the Kingdom of Ugarit: A Weberian Analysis of Ancient Near Eastern Society." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1995.

Schmidt, Nathaniel. "The Son of Man in the Book of Daniel." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 19 (1900): 22-28.

Schoors, A. "The Particle כי." Old Testament Studies 21 (1981): 240-253.

Schurer, Emil. *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*. Vol. III.1. Edited by Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, and Matthew Black. Revised English edition. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1973-1986.

Scott, R. B. Y. "Behold He Cometh with Clouds." *New Testament Studies* 5 (1959): 127-132.

Segal, Alan F. "Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and Their Environment." Pages 1333-1394 in *Vorkonstantinisches Christentum*. Principat 23:2. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1980.

______. "Some Observations about Paul and Intermediaries." Paper presented at the Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins. Philadelphia, PA, February 4, 1988. Cited 1 January 2003. Online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/psco/year25/8802.shtml.

_______. *Two Powers in Heaven: Early Rabbinic Reports about Christianity and Gnosticism.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977.

Segert, Stanislav. *A Basic Grammar of the Ugaritic Language.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984.

Seitz, Christopher R. "The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109:2 (1990): 229-247.

Seow, C.L. "Face." Pages 322-325 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Sivan, Daniel. *A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language.* Handbuch der Orientalistik 28. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997.

Skehan, Patrick W. "A Fragment of the 'Song of Moses' (Deut 32) from Qumran." *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 136 (1954) 12-15.

_______. “Qumran and the Present State of Old Testament Text Studies: The Masoretic Text,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959): 21-25.

Smith, Mark S. “Divine Travel as a Token of Rank.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 16 (1984): 359.

_______. *The Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002.

_______. "Interpreting the Baʿal Cycle." *Ugarit Forschungen* 18 (1986): 313-339.

_______. *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel’s Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Smith, Morton. “Ascent to the Heavens and Deification in 4QM[a].” Pages 181-188 in *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The New York University Conference in Memory of Yigael Yadin.* Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman; Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 8. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990.

Sommer, Benjamin. *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40-66.* Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Speiser, E. A. “The Biblical Idiom *pānîm hōlekîm*.” Pages 515-517 in *The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Volume of the Jewish Quarterly Review.* Philadelphia: Jewish Quarterly Review, 1967.

_______. *Genesis.* Anchor Bible 1. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1964.

_______. "Studies in Semitic Formatives." Pages 416-432 in *Oriental and Biblical Studies: Collected Writings of E.A. Speiser.* Edited by J.J. Finkelstein and Moshe Greenberg. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1967.

Spronk, K. *Beatific Afterlife in Ancient Israel and the Near East.* Alter Orient und Altes Testament 219. Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker: Neukirchener Verlag, 1986

Stadelmann, L.I.J. *The Hebrew Conception of the World: A Philological and Literary Study.* Analecta biblica 39. Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1970.

_______. "Down with Hêlēl! The Assumed Mythological Background of Isa. 14:12." Pages 717-726 in *"Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf": Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient: Festschrift für Oswald Loretz.* Münster, 1998.

Stadelman, Luis I. J. *The Hebrew Conception of the World: A Philological and Literary Study.* Analecta Biblica 39. Rome: Pontifical Institute Press, 1970.

Stone, Michael E., ed. *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran, Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.

Strolz, Walter. “The Unique One: The Uniqueness of God According to Deutero-Isaiah.” Pages 257-266 in *Standing Before God: Studies on Prayer in Scriptures and in Tradition with Essays in Honor of John M. Oesterreicher.* New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1981.

Stuckenbruck, Loren T. *Angel Veneration and Christology.* Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1995.

_______. “An Angelic Refusal of Worship: The Tradition and Its Function in the Apocalypse of John.” Pages 679-696 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1994.* Edited by Eugene H. Lovering, Jr.; Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 33; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994.

_______. “The Book of Daniel and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Making and Remaking of the Biblical Tradition.” Pages 135-171 in *The Hebrew Bible and Qumran.* Edited by J.H. Charlesworth. N. Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2000.

_______. “Worship and Monotheism in *The Ascension of Isaiah*.” Pages 70-89 in *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism: Papers from the St. Andrews Conference on the Historical Origins of the Worship of Jesus.* Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements 63. Edited by Carey C. Newman, James R. Davila, and Gladys S. Lewis. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

Stuhlmueller, C. *Creative Redemption in Second Isaiah.* Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1970.

Sweeney, Marvin A. *Isaiah 1-39.* Forms of the Old Testament Literature XVI. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1996.

Tabor, James. “Firstborn of Many Brothers: A Pauline Notion of Apotheosis.” Pages 295-303 in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1984* Edited by Kent Richards. Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers 21. Chico: Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984.

Talmon, S. "The Old Testament Text." Pages 159-199 in *Cambridge History of the Bible.* Vol. 1. Edited by P.R. Ackroyd and C.F. Evans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.

Tate, Marvin E. *Psalms 51-100*. Word Biblical Commentary 20. Dallas: Word Books, 1990.

Tigay, Jeffrey H. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1996.

Tigchelaar, Eibert J.C. *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of the Watchers, and Apocalyptic. Oudtestamentische Studien* 35. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996.

Toorn, Karel van der. “Anat-Yahu, Some Other Deities, and the Jews of Elephantine.” *Numen* 39 (1992): 88-92.

_______. "Yahweh." Pages 910-913 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Tov, E. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

_______. “Textual Criticism (OT).” Pages 395-411 in vol. VI of the *Anchor Bible Dictionary.* Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Trigg, Joseph W. “The Angel of Great Counsel: Christ and the Angelic Hierarchy in Origen’s Theology.” *Journal of Theological Studies* 42:1 (April 1991): 35-51.

Tromp, N. *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Netherworld in the Old Testament.* Biblica et orientalia 21. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969.

Tropper, Josef. *Ugaritische Grammatik.* Alter Orient und Altes Testament 273. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000.

Tsevat, Matitiahu. "God and the Gods in Assembly." *Hebrew Union College Annual* XL-XLI (1969-1970): 123-137.

Tsumura, D.T. “The Deluge (*mabbûl*) in Psalm 29:10.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 20 (1988): 351-355.

Uehlinger, C. "Leviathan." Pages 511-515 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Ullendorff, E. "Ugaritic Studies within their Semitic and Eastern Mediterranean Setting." *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 46 (1963-64): 236-249.

Ulrich, Eugene. “Qumran and the Canon of the Old Testament.” Pages 57-80 in *The Biblical Canons, Proceedings of the 50th Colloquium Biblicum Lovianiense.* Edited by J.M. de Jonge. Bibliotheca ephemeridium theologicarum lovaniensium 163. Leuven: Peeters, 2003.

Ulrich, Eugene. “The Qumran Biblical Scrolls—The Scriptures of Late Second Temple Judaism.” Pages 67-87 in *The Dead Sea Scrolls in Their Historical Context*. Edited by Timothy H. Lim, et.al. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000.

_______. “The Text of the Hebrew Scriptures at the Time of Hillel and Jesus.” Pages 85-108 in *Congress Volume, Basel 2001.* Edited by A. Lemaire. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 92. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2002.

Ulrich, Eugene, F. M. Cross, S. W. Crawford, J. A. Duncan, P. W. Skehan, E. Tov, and J. T. Barrera. *Qumran Cave 4.IX: Deuteronomy to Kings.* Discoveries in the Judean Desert XIV. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995.

VanBeek, Lawrence. “1 Enoch Among Jews and Christians: A Fringe Connection?” Pages 93-115 in *Christian-Jewish Relations Through the Centuries.* Edited by Stanley E. Porter and Brook W. R. Pearson. Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 192. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

VanderKam, James C. “1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs, and Enoch in Early Christian Literature.” Pages 33-101 in *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity.* Edited by James C. VanderKam and William Adler. CRINT 3.4. Assen/Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

_______. “The Angel Story in the Book of Jubilees.” Pages 151-170 in *Pseudepigraphic Perspectives: The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 12-14 January 1997.* Edited by Esther G. Chazon and Michael Stone, with the collaboration of Avital Pinnick. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1999.

_______. “Joshua the high Priest and the Interpretation of Zechariah 3.” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 53 (1991): 553-573.

Veijola, Timo. "The Witness in the Clouds: Ps 89:38." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107:3 (1988): 413-417.

Waltke, Bruce K. and M. O'Connor. *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Watson, W. E. G. “Ugaritic Lexical Studies in Perspective.” *Studi epigrafici e linguistici* 12 (1995): 221-222.

Wegner, Judith Romney. “Coming Before the LORD: לפני יהוה and the Exclusion of Women from the Divine Presence.” Pages 81-91in *Hesed Ve-Emet: Studies in Honor of ErnestS. Frerichs.* Edited by Jodi Magness and Seymour Gitin. Brown Judaic Studies 320. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998.

Weinfeld, M. *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic School.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.

Whybray, R. N. *The Heavenly Counsellor in Isaiah XL 13-14: A Study of the Sources of the Theology of Second Isaiah.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Wicks, Henry J. *The Doctrine of God in the Jewish Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Literature.* London: Hunter & Longhurst, 1915.

Williams, C.H. *I am He: The Interpretation of ʾAni Hūʾ in Jewish and Early Christian Literature.* Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 113. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2000.

Wilson, I. *Out of the Midst of the Fire: Divine Presence in Deuteronomy.* Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 151. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995.

Woude, A.S. van der. “Melchisedek als himmlische Erlosergestalt in den neugefundenen eschatologischen Midraschim aus Qumran Hohle XI.” *Oudtestamentische Studien* 14 (1965): 354-373.

Wright, G.E. "The Lawsuit of God: A Form-Critical Study of Deuteronomy 32." Pages 26-67 in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg.* Edited by Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962.

Wyatt, Nicholas. “‘Jedidiah’ and Cognate Forms as a Title of Royal Legitimation.” *Biblica* 66 (1985): 112-125.

_______. *Myths of Power: A Study of Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugaritic and Biblical Tradition.* Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur 13. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996.

_______. “Quaternities in the Mythology of Baʿal.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 21 (1989): 451-459.

_______. “The Relationship of the Deities Dagan and Hadad.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 12 (1980): 375-379.

_______. *Religious Texts from Ugarit.* 2nd ed. London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

_______. “The Significance of ṢPN in Western Thought.” Pages 213-237 in *Ugarit: Ein ostmediterranes Kulturzentrum im Alten Orient: Ergebnisse und Perspektiven der Forschung.* Edited by Manfried Dietrich and Oswlad Loretz. Ugarit und seine altorientalische Umwelt 1. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995.

_______. “The Theogony Motif in Ugarit and the Hebrew Bible.” Pages 395-420 in *Ugarit and the Bible: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Ugarit and the Bible.* Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur 11. Edited by George J. Brooke, Adrian H.W. Curtis, and John F. Healey. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1994.

_______. “The Titles of the Ugaritic Storm God.” *Ugarit Forschungen* 24 (1992): 403-424.

Xella, P. “Resheph.” Pages 700-703 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Yadin, Y. *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness.* Translated by Batya and Chaim Rabin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962.

Young, Frances. “Christology and Creation: Towards a Hermeneutic of Patristic Christology.” Pages 191-205 in *The Myriad Christ: Plurality and the Quest for Unity in Contemporary Christology.* Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium 152. Edited by T. Merrigan and J. Haers. Leuven: Peeters, 2000.

Yusa, Michiko. “Henotheism.” *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 6. Edited by Mircea Eliade. New York: MacMillan, 1987.

Zatelli, I. “Astrology and the Worship of the Stars in the Bible.” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 103 (1991): 86-99.

_______. “Constellations.” Pages 202-204 in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible.* Edited by Karel van der Toorn and Bob Becking. 2nd extensively revised ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999.

Zevit, Z. "The Structure and Individual Elements of Daniel 7." *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 80 (1968): 394-396.

Zijl, P.J. van. *Baal: A Study of the Texts in Connexion with Baal in the Ugaritic Epics.* Alter Orient und Altes Testament 10. Kevelaer: Butzon und Bercker; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1972.

Zwiep, Arie. “Assumptus est in Caelum: Rapture and Heavenly Exaltation in Early Judaism and Luke-Acts.” Pages 323-349 in *Auferstehung.* Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2001.

The Divine Council at Ugarit and in Canaanite / Phoenician sources

El (also Elyon outside Ugarit)
(ultimate high sovereign)

Baal
(The Divine Vice Regent)

Vice-regent of El; the "ruler / king of the gods"; the "Most High" (*ʿly*); "deputy" or "regent" (<*y*>*tgr*). He is a son of El, brother to El and Athirat's other 70 sons. The vice – regency was fought for among the sons of El, and so the vice regent is a created son of El who acts as the special agent of El – fights his battles and rules the gods as appointed authority over the other lower ranking divine rulers of the earth, the sons / princes of El.

The 70 sons of El (and Athirat, his wife)

Referred to as "princes"; "judges" ["rulers"]; "kings" (cf. Handy and Pardee re. the "many *mlkm*" issue), "stars"; and "sons". This group, with El and Athirat, constitute the "council proper" - the royal house of the heavens as it were.

These many "kings" (*mlkm*) had geographical rule

The *mlʾkm*

These are part of the council at large, but not the council "proper" since they are not sons of El. They are referred to as gods, though. They take orders and serve El and the higher authorities. They are the "council staff."

The Divine Council in Pre-Exilic Israel

Yahweh
(came to be identified with both El and Baal)

Divine Vice Regent
(a hypostasis of Yahweh; his essence brought forth as an independent, but not autonomous, being)

- The Name (Psa 20:1; 54:1; 44:5; Deu 12:5,11; 16:6, 11; 1Ki 8:1-19 [links the Glory Cloud and the Name]; 2Ch 20:9)
- The Word (Jer 1; 1Sa 3)
- The Glory (Exo 16:9; 24:9ff.; 40:34 [linking the glory and the cloud – see below])
- The "Presence" with whom certain people speak "face to face" (Gen 32:30 [cf. the context of wrestling with the elohim / angel; cp. Hos 12:4-5 Heb]; Exo 33:11; Deu 5:4; Num 14:14; Jdg 6:22
- ? Wisdom and the Spirit are independent grammatically (conceptually?) feminine figures. Wisdom is created or brought forth prior to the creation of the stars [= sons of God]) in Prov 8:22ff., and the Spirit may be hypostasized in the Hebrew Bible in Isa 63:1-11. This is not Christian tri-unity, but interchange with Yahweh as are the other hypostases (and the NT itself may suggest this as well – cf. Acts 8:26-29; 10:19-22)

The hypostasis of Yahweh at times took human form, and was difficult (if not impossible) to clearly distinguish from Yahweh:

- The "Angel of Yahweh" in whom was the Name (Exo. 23:20-23; cf. Gen 48:15-16; Exo 13:21; 14:19, 24; 32:34; 34:5; Jdg 2:1-3; cp. Gen 32:24, 30 and Hos 12:4-5 [Heb]; both Yahweh and the Angel occupy the cloud and are thus conceptually interchanged). See also Exo 3:1-3; Josh 5:13-15; cp. Num 22:23; Exo 15:3). If, as virtually all scholars agree, the Cloud and the Name are hypostases, then so is the Angel of Yahweh.
- The "glorious man" on God's throne (Ezek 1:26ff.; Exo 24:9ff., 33:18; 34:5; Isa 6)
- The "cloud witness" who guarantees Yahweh's covenant with David (Psa 89:38-39 [Heb])

The sons of God
Called "sons of the Most High" and "elohim" in Psa 82; "princes"; "stars" (Job 38:7-8) and "stars of El" (Isa 14:12-15). They "judge" the 70 nations, exercising geographical rule over them (Deut 4:19-20; 32:8-9; Dan 10)

The *mlʾkm*
The term is typically translated "angels." They fulfill the same servant roles as Ugarit / Canaan and are not royal sons of Yahweh-El. They may be gods, as at Ugarit, in which case my thesis gains strength (cf. Gen 28:12ff.; cp. Gen 32 (esp. vv. 24-30; 35:1-9 [the God / gods appearing interchange]).

The Divine Council in Post-Exilic Israel / Second Temple Literature

Yahweh

Divine Vice Regent

(The hypostasis of Yahweh idea is preserved and perpetuated through descriptions of a second deity level being who is God's chief agent – see Daniel, Qumran, Philo, and the idea of the Spirit as the Presence of Yahweh). For example, Son of Man in Daniel 7:9ff.; Melchizedek in 11QMelch; the Logos. At Qumran the vice-regent takes on a more apparent priestly / intercessory role (cf. Baal as intercessor and the Angel of Yahweh's power to withhold forgiveness of sins). "Sons of God" and "gods" are still used in descriptions of the council (175 such plurals at Qumran). As Segal points out, after the second century C.E., a number of the verses to the left were forbidden reading without the assistance of one's rabbi since they taught the idea of a second power in heaven. Prior to that time, the second power was not considered a heresy. Second Temple literature made a careful distinction between Yahweh and the second occupant of heaven's throne (or between the cherubim) as Yahweh's hypostasized Presence. This person was not a competitor to Yahweh, since he *was* Yahweh in anthropomorphic form. Yet he was not Yahweh since he obeyed Yahweh.

The sons of God
The previous nomenclature is retained, especially at Qumran. It is also supplemented by terms like "Watchers"; "archangel"

The *mlʾkm*
"Angel" is used as an overlapping term in Second Temple lit for Watchers and archangels, which may mean a blurring of categories. More likely, in view of the retention of the "Deut 4 / 32 worldview"—that the nations have ruling deities assigned by Yahweh—the word took on a purely functional meaning. That is, *any* member of the heavenly host is a messenger (*mlʾk*) of Yahweh. If the "angels of God" of Gen 28 / 35 are gods, this prompts a new (monolatrous) perspective of the "geographical ruling deity" language ("e.g., "dominions"; "archai"; and "thrones") in the NT and early Jewish material.

Note to the Reader

The reader should be aware that this dissertation assumes certain critical presuppositions about the books of Isaiah and Daniel of which the author is not necessarily persuaded. Multiple authorship of Isaiah is assumed, but I am not persuaded that redaction does not better explain the phenomena of the text of Isaiah (as opposed to the combination of completely separate "books" of Isaiah). A late date (2nd century B.C.) for Daniel is also assumed, but I do not necessarily think that this view is completely coherent. The late date is helpful for the arguments herein, but is not essential. An earlier date (6th century B.C.) works as well, since that, too, is chronologically subsequent to the earliest secure dating of the received texts of the Torah, the Deuteronomistic History, and most of the prophetic books.